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AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

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SUITABLE ALL SEASONS.

May Mrs. Oliphant.

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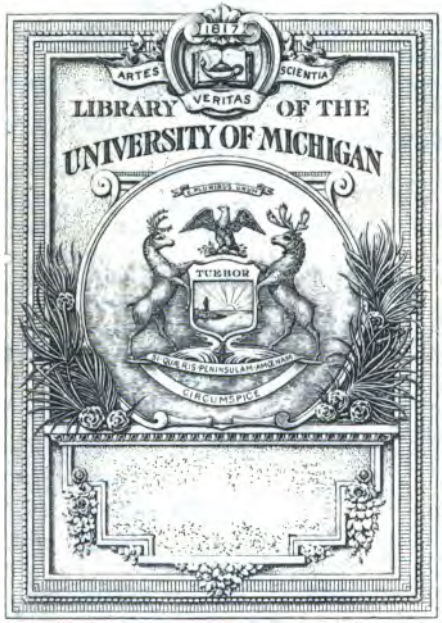
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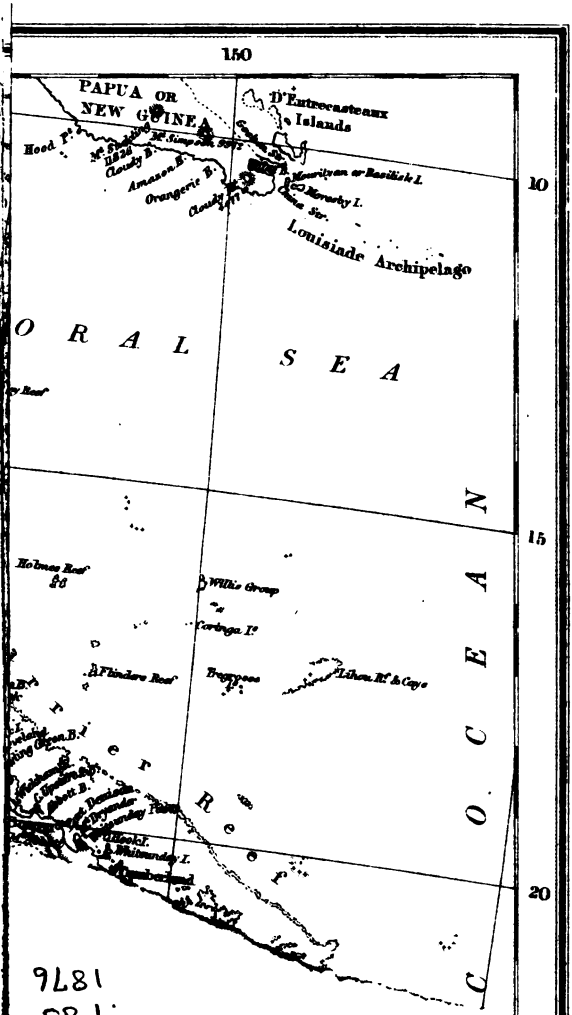


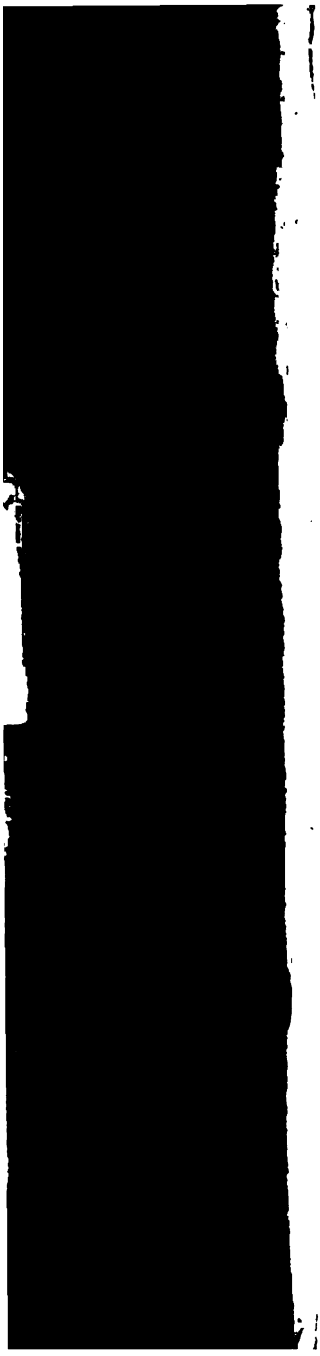
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Mt. Owen Stanley
Mt. Victoria
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Mt. Suckling
Mt. Brown
Mt. Hayter
Mt. Musgrave
Mt. Knutsford
Mt. Hamilton
Mt. Lawes
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C. Byron
Richmond R.
Shoal B.
Solitary Is
Port Macquarie
Camden Haven
Harrington Inlet
L. Wallis
Sugar Loaf Pt
Port Stephens
Newcastle & Port Hunter
Macquarie L.
Broken B. & Hawkesbury R.
Port Jackson
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Botany B.
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AUSTRALIA

AND

NEW ZEALAND.

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193 PICCADILLY.
1876.

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NEW SOUTH WALES

AND

QUEENSLAND.

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE,

AUTHOR OF

"SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA,"
"VICTORIA AND TASMANIA,"
"NEW ZEALAND."

NEW EDITION.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1875.

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NEW SOUTH WALES.

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NEW SOUTH WALES.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE COLONY.

On reaching Sydney the traveller should remember that he is visiting the spot on which our Australian empire was commenced, amidst difficulties of which we in England in these days think very little. We know something of Australian explorers of a later date. We do hear of Oxley, of Hume and Hovell, of Cunningham, Mitchell, Eyre, Sturt, Kennedy, Leichardt, Gregory, Stuart, Burke and Wills, and others who have succeeded in opening up new regions in Australia or have lost their lives in the attempt;—but we hear nothing of the perils endured and the efforts made by those who first brought convicts out to Botany Bay, and who were called upon to perform the almost impossible task of feeding and of governing them there.

Captain Cook landed at Botany Bay, a few miles south of Sydney Harbour,—or Port Jackson, as it is properly called,—in 1770, and took possession of the land on behalf of the English Crown. But Captain Cook was by no means the first to find Australia. Manoel Godenho, a Portuguese, is supposed to be the right claimant of that honour, and is said to have landed on the north-west corner of the continent in 1601. A Dutchman was the next, by name John William Verschoor, who is said to have touched at Cape York, the northern point of the great Queensland promontory, in 1606. Dirk Hartog in 1616. another Dutchman,

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was the third; and then, for many years, the Dutch continued to discover parts of the coast and various islands or what was then called Terra Australis. They have left their names behind them in many places;—in Nuytsland, a most dreary region on the southern coast, at present utterly useless, so called from Peter Nuyts; in the great Gulf of Carpentaria in the north, so called from Peter Carpenter; in Tasmania,—Van Diemen's Land, as it used to be,—discovered by Abel Jan Tasman, who called it Van Diemen's Land after the governor of the Dutch East India Company, who had sent him on his voyage, and since re-christened Tasmania because a flavour of convicts had attached itself to the former name. Indeed the Dutch did so much and were so energetic in their voyages, that they were justified in calling the new continent New Holland; and it seems now to be marvellous that a people so enterprising, and at that time so prone to get and to keep territory, should have lost their hold of the great "Terra Australis." It appears that they defeated their own object by their own secrecy and mystification. They published no records of the voyages made, and no charts of the newly discovered seas, fearing that the great future possession would become too well known to other explorers. Consequently, even among themselves, the doings of their sailors were unknown and unappreciated, and no rational desire was created for possession of the land.

It seems that a Frenchman was on the coast before any Englishman, one M. de St. Alouran having anchored off Cape Leuwin—the great south-eastern corner of the continent—in 1670. After him came William Dampier, an English buccaneer, who in 1688 landed on the western coast, and was, as far as we know, the first Englishman to put his foot on the soil of our great dependency. For eighty years after that English, Dutch, and French, with intermittent energies, endeavoured to become masters of New Holland. In 1770 Captain Cook, not only landed at Botany Bay, but actually surveyed a large portion of the eastern coast, and formally took possession of the country in the name of the King of England. This he did, having first touched at New

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Zealand, which had been discovered by Tasman in 1642. In 1777 Captain Cook made another voyage into the Pacific, —in the course of which enterprise he was murdered at the Sandwich Islands. It was at this time that he recommended the English government to send out to Botany Bay the convicts from England which could no longer be sent to the revolted colonies of America. In 1787 Commodore Phillip, the first Australian governor, was despatched in accordance with Cook's advice to form a penal settlement at Botany Bay. Finding Botany Bay and the territory immediately around it to be altogether unfitted for the purpose he had in hand, with no fertile land around it, and no sufficient supply of water, Commodore Phillip sailed northward, entered Port Jackson,—as Cook had already called it, —and founded the settlement for British convicts.

In the same year a French captain, La Perouse, also landed at Botany Bay, anchoring there as it happened on the very day on which Commodore Phillip hoisted the English colours at the head of Port Jackson. La Perouse perished on his road home, but Commodore Phillip created the colony of New South Wales,—from whence have sprung all our Australian colonies.

Mr. Rusden, who knows Australian history probably as well as any man living, commences his account of the discovery, survey, and settlement of Port Phillip, or of the colony of Victoria as it is now called, with the following words:—"American colonization sprang mainly from private adventure. The foundation of colonies in Australia was not the result of private enterprise, but of the policy of the ministry of which Pitt was the real as well as the nominal head." There can be no doubt that Mr. Rusden is right in his statement that our possession of Australia is due to the government of the day, and not to any gallant adventurer such as was Raleigh, or to any band of Puritan brothers going forth in search of freedom, as did they who landed from the *Mayflower* on the shores of Massachusetts. The expedition to Botany Bay was planned by government, —whether actually by Pitt or not I do not know that we can now say,—with the view of finding a shore on which

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we might rid ourselves of our ruffians. It was to be governed by martial law, and was based on the footing of a penal settlement. After that the French still made renewed attempts, and endeavoured to call the whole southern district of Australia "Terre Napoléon." This was intended to include, with much other territory, all that country which is, perhaps, now better known as Victoria, than by the imperial name then given to it.

Governor Phillip, with his convicts and few attendants, had by no means a pleasant time of it. He had indeed about as bad a time as any government servant of whom we now read. There were two establishments for convicts in his hands, one at Sydney, and the other at Norfolk Island,—where the descendants of the mutineers of the Bounty are now dwindling back to the insipidity of savage life amidst the charms of Utopian freedom. In Governor Phillip's time the life on Norfolk Island was by no means idle or Utopian. There was a great deal of rebellion and running away, a great deal of punishment of a kind which now seems to us to have been very barbarous, but without which the convict element would probably have got altogether the better of the governing element. And there was terrible want, not only at Norfolk Island, but also on the mainland,—want so dire as almost to have become starvation. Nearly all the food consumed for the first years had to be brought either from England, or from some other distant land, such as Batavia or Bengal. The land round Sydney, on which attempts were made to create farms, was found to be poor and barren. The few cattle which the settlers or, rather, which the governor possessed, strayed away or were killed by the blacks. And then these black men, the aboriginals, were a source of difficulties for which no satisfactory solution could be found. If only they would be friendly all might be well;—but how could friendship be expected from a race whose all was being taken from them by a handful of strangers who spoke a strange language,—and who had fire-arms? If the blacks would be friendly it would be well; but if not—then they must be repressed, as were the convicts. The settlement was not to be abandoned because savage tribes

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could not be made to understand quickly the benefits of civilisation,—and the blacks were repressed, and driven away, and sometimes starved, to the great affliction of the first governors.

For five years Governor Phillip fought his battle against convicts, black men, recusant settlers, famine, floods, and drought, and he fought it like a hero. In every emergency,—and every day created a new emergency,—he was forced to think for himself. He had no ministers, and no council. He was commander-in-chief, and the life of every man was in his hands. But he was responsible to the King's government at home, and to public opinion in the colony. From day to day there was pressed upon him the fear that, one after another, they might all perish from want. If this vessel or that did not come at the expected time, there would not be even half a day's rations per day either for convicts, freemen, or for the governor. That modicum of half a day's rations was, more than once, the allowance for them all. I do not know where to look for a better story of great, continued, unpicturesque heroism than in the records of Governor Phillip's career. In these days it is very pleasant to be a governor of a colony. A charming house is provided, there are aides-de-camp and private secretaries, there is a liberal salary, there is probably much hospitality, and just enough of work to enable the governor of an Australian colony to feel that he earns what is bestowed upon him. But in truth he governs nobody, and is simply a medium of communication between the ministry of the colony and the Secretary of State at home. In Governor Phillip's time it was very different. He had indeed to govern,—to rule all and everything, and to do so with an iron hand that could not dare to relax its severity. His hand was of iron, but his heart was very soft. He had no rest from providing for the wants of those around him, and when they were put on half rations, and on less than half, his own were always as scanty as the scantiest.

At the end of five years Governor Phillip went home, and after a lapse of two years,—which two years were very injurious to the young settlement,—was succeeded by Captain

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Hunter, who had come out with Phillip. Hunter again, after five or six years, was succeeded by another officer who had come to Botany Bay with Phillip's first band of convicts,—namely Governor King. And these men also were heroes in their way, facing terrible difficulties—difficulties in regard to the black men, difficulties in regard to the convicts, difficulties in regard to food, and, perhaps worst of all, difficulties in regard to a certain New South Wales Corps, which had been sent out from England with an idea that perhaps by such military body the convicts might be controlled,—and perhaps also, in some degree, the governor also. The officers of this corps soon became dominant in the colony, and used their dominion after a strange fashion. They obtained the right, or at any rate the power, of an almost exclusive monopoly,-at first in spirits, and afterwards in all imported goods. When Governor Hunter and Governor King had resigned, the battle was carried on by Governor Bligh,—the famous Captain Bligh of the Bounty,—who thus became king and lord over the very island on which are now settled the descendants of those who took his ship away from him and sent him adrift upon the waters. Governor Bligh was a very rough man, but seems to have been a manly fellow, with a strong idea of his duty. In the third year of his government he was arrested by the commanding officer of the very troop which was supposed at home to be at his hand for his support. His government was then brought to an end, and the New South Wales Corps was sent home.

Thus were passed the first twenty years of the new colony, amidst struggles of which the history has not yet been fairly written. Great efforts in the meantime had been made to extend the settled district. Farms were established up the Paramatta River, on grounds now rich with orange groves, but which were gradually found to be utterly unfit for cereal crops. The first attempts at growing corn in the neighbourhood of Sydney were failures, sad enough to break the hearts of all but heroes. The Hawkesbury was discovered —a magnificent river which makes its way into the ocean about fifteen miles north of Sydney Harbour,—and on the

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Upper Hawkesbury, where now stands the town of Windsor, the land was found to be a rich alluvial deposit, capable of growing anything. But no sooner had settlers made their young home on this seemingly happy soil, than floods came and washed everything away. And there is Windsor now, with its rich lands, and its constant floods,—and some 2,000 inhabitants, who must surely be web-footed. Various also were the attempts made under these first governors to find a way out from the narrow strip of territory occupied along the shore across the mountains into the interior. These are the Blue Mountains, which are blue indeed, and very lovely, —now crossed by the Bathurst railway, but over which in those days the settlers long found it impossible to make their way. Wool had become an article of export during these early years, and did at last give rise to the energies which in time forced a passage through the Blue Mountains. Captain Macarthur, who had been one of the officers belonging to that wretched New South Wales Corps, introduced merino sheep into the colony, and obtained a grant of 10,000 acres of land. Then others took to massing flocks. In 1813 there came a great drought, and Messrs. Wentworth, Blaxland, and Lawson got through the mountains in search of grass for their sheep.

In 1805 a second dependency on New South Wales was established on the northern shore of Van Diemen's Land, for the purpose of removing thither convicts from Norfolk Island,—which place was abandoned, as the governor found it impossible to supply food to a settlement at such a distance. The abandonment of the station was, however, only temporary. Thus was commenced the second in date of our Australian colonies. In 1825 Van Diemen's Land was, at its own request, separated from New South Wales, and established as a penal colony on its own bottom, with its own governor, and its own expenses. Its name soon became as familiar with us as that of the parent colony,—but we viewed them both only as the homes of our exported rascaldom. In 1836 Port Phillip,—which is now the colony of Victoria,— became a dependency under New South Wales. In 1851 she was allowed to go alone, and is now, at any rate in her

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own opinion, the first in importance of all the colonial children of Great Britain. In 1839 New Zealand became a dependency under New South Wales,—but the child did not remain long in leading-strings. In 1840 New Zealand received a governor of her own from England. In 1859 the Moreton Bay district, constituting at that time the northern half,—or something more than half,—of what was left of the colony of New South Wales, was cut off, and the separate colony of Queensland was established. In this way New South Wales was the parent of all our present Australian colonies, except South Australia and Western Australia, both of which originated in efforts made from home.

In 1856, five years after the separation of Victoria, responsible government was established in New South Wales, and governors of the happy, hospitable, sleek, and unburdened kind came into vogue. This happened during the reign of Sir William Denison, who came out in 1853 with the task of inaugurating the change. He, however, still kept the title of Governor-General of Australasia, which was not borne by his successor, Sir John Young. Perhaps of all her governors, Sir Richard Bourke is the one best remembered and the most esteemed in New South Wales. He came to the colony in 1832, and remained there for the normal period of six years. A large statue to his memory, standing at the gate of the Sydney domain, helps to keep alive his honours. He was no doubt a firm, considerate man, excellently well qualified for his duties. He was preceded by Governor Darling, and succeeded by Governor Gipps, as to both of whom it is now recorded in the colony that, if diamonds, they were rough diamonds.

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CHAPTER II.

SYDNEY.

I DESPAIR of being able to convey to any reader my own idea of the beauty of Sydney Harbour. I have seen nothing equal to it in the way of land-locked sea scenery,—nothing second to it. Dublin Bay, the Bay of Spezzia, New York, and the Cove of Cork are all picturesquely fine. Bantry Bay, with the nooks of sea running up to Glengarrif, is very lovely. But they are not equal to Sydney either in shape, in colour, or in variety. I have never seen Naples, or Rio Janeiro, or Lisbon;—but from description and pictures I am led to think that none of them can possess such a world of loveliness of water as lies within Sydney Heads. The proper thing to assert is that the fleets of all nations might rest securely within the protection of the harbour. How much acreage of sea the fleets of all nations might require I cannot even surmise;—but if they could be anchored together anywhere, they could surely be so anchored at Sydney.

In none of the books which I have seen respecting the early settlement of the colony, or of its subsequent difficulties in progress, is much stress laid on the scenery of Sydney Harbour, or of the Hawkesbury River which is near it. Nor is much said of the glorious defiles of the Blue Mountains. Such books have been generally circumstantial and statistical,—either despondent or hopeful, according to the opinions of the writers. They have always insisted much—and have done so with well-deserved zeal—on the great efforts made by Australian discoverers. They have told us of the drawbacks of the land,—which are very great, as the soil is often

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poor, is encumbered with forests, deficient in water, and subject to a climate which is not propitious to cereals. On the other hand, we have heard from them much of Australian wool, and for the last twenty years of Australian gold. We gather from these books many facts as to the past events of Australia, and many opinions as to its future. But we hear very little of Australian scenery. Consequently we, at home in England, are inclined to believe that Australia, as a country, is displeasing to the eye. The eternal gum-tree has become to us an Australian crest, giving evidence of Australian ugliness. The gum-tree is ubiquitous, and is not the loveliest, though neither is it by any means the ugliest, of trees. But there are scenes of nature in Australia as lovely as are to be found in any part of the world;—not so closely congregated as in Western Europe, but quite as much so as in North America. They are often difficult of access,—and must remain so, till the population is large enough to stretch itself about the country, and to make railways, and to run river steamers.

The people of Sydney are by no means indifferent to the beauty of their harbour, and claim for it the admiration of strangers with something of the language, but not with the audacity, of Americans, when they demand the opinions of their visitors as to their remarkable institutions. There is something of shamefacedness, a confession of provincial weakness, almost an acknowledgment that they ought not to be proud of a thing so insignificant, in the tone in which you are asked whether, upon the whole, you do not think Sydney Harbour rather pretty. Every Sydney man and every Sydney woman does ask you the question,—as does every American ask that other question; but it is asked in Sydney with bated breath, and with something of an apology, "Of course you have been bothered out of your life about our harbour;—but it is pretty,—don't you think so?" It is so inexpressibly lovely that it makes a man ask himself whether it would not be worth his while to move his household gods to the eastern coast of Australia, in order that he might look at it as long as he can look at anything. There are certain spots, two or three miles out of the town, now

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occupied generally by villas, or included in the grounds of some happy resident, which leave nothing for the imagination to add. Greenoaks and Mount Adelaide, belonging to two brothers, Mr. Thomas and Mr. Henry Mort, are perfect. Sir James Martin, who was the prime minister when I was first there, and who, I hope, may soon be so again, has a garden falling down to the sea, which is like fairyland. There is a rock outside,—or probably inside,—the grounds of Woolhara, belonging to Mr. Cooper, on which the blacks in the old days, when they were happy and undisturbed, used to collect themselves for festive, political, and warlike purposes. I wonder whether they enjoyed it as I did! How they must have hated the original Cooper when he came and took it,—bought it for 20*s.* an acre, out of which they got no dividend, or had a grant of it from the English Crown! Woolhara is a magnificent property, covered with villas and gardens, all looking down upon the glorious sea. In England it would be worth half a million of money, and, as things go on, it will soon be worth as much in New South Wales; and perhaps some future Cooper will be Duke Cooper or Marquis Cooper, and Woolhara will be as famous as Lowther or Chatsworth. It is infinitely more lovely than either. I envied the young man, and almost hated him for having it,—although he had just given me an excellent dinner.

I doubt whether I ever read any description of scenery which gave me an idea of the place described, and I am not sure that such effect can be obtained by words. Scott in prose, and Byron in verse, are both eloquent in declaring that this or that place is romantic, picturesque, or charming; and their words have been powerful enough to send thousands to see the spots which they have praised. But the charm conveyed has been in the words of the writer, not in the beauty of the place. I know that the task would be hopeless were I to attempt to make others understand the nature of the beauty of Sydney Harbour. I can say that it is lovely, but I cannot paint its loveliness. The sea runs up in various bays or coves, indenting the land all around the city, so as to give a thousand different aspects of the water,—and not of water, broad, unbroken, and unrelieved,

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but of water always with jutting corners of land beyond it, and then again of water and then again of land. And you,—the resident,—even though you be a lady not over strong, though you be a lady, if possible not over young,—will find, unless you choose your residence most unfortunately, that you have walks within your reach as deliciously beautiful as though you had packed up all your things and travelled days and spent pounds to find them. One Mrs. Macquarie, the wife, I believe, of Governor Macquarie, made a road, or planned a road, or at any rate gave her name to a road, which abuts on the public domain, and is all but in the town. A mile and a half from the top of Hunter Street carries the pedestrian all round it. Two shillings does as much for him or her who prefers a hansom cab,—and the Sydney hansoms are the very best cabs in the world. At the end of it is Mrs. Macquarie's chair,—with a most ill-written inscription, but with a view that affords compensation even for that. The public gardens, not half a mile from the top of Hunter Street, beat all the public gardens I ever saw,—because they possess one little nook of sea of their own. I do not love public gardens generally, because I am called on to listen to the names of shrubs conveyed in three Latin words, and am supposed to interest myself in the locality from which they have been brought. I envy those who have the knowledge which I want; but I put my back up against attempts made to convey it to me, knowing that it is too late. But it was impossible not to love the public gardens at Sydney,—because one could sit under the trees and look out upon the sea. There is a walk from the bottom of Macquarie Street,—not Mrs. Macquarie's Road, but the old governor's own street,—leading round by the fort, under the governor's house, to the public gardens. The whole distance round may be a mile and a half from the top of Hunter Street, which opens on to Macquarie Street. It runs close along the sea, with grassy slopes on which you may lie and see the moon glimmer on the water as it only glimmers on land-locked coves of the ocean. You may lie there prostrate on the grass, with the ripple close at your feet within a quarter-of-an-hour of your club.

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Your after-dinner cigar will last you there and back if you will walk fairly and smoke slowly. Nobody ever is there at that hour, the young men of Sydney preferring to smoke their cigars in their arm-chairs. Then there is the little trip by steam ferry over to the north shore, where lives that prince of professors and greatest of Grecians, Doctor Badham, of the university. I should like to be the ferryman over that ferry to Lavender Bay on condition that the Doctor met me with some refreshment on each journey. Sydney is one of those places which, when a man leaves it knowing that he will never return, he cannot leave without a pang and a tear. Such is its loveliness.

The town itself, as a town, independently of its sea and its suburbs, was, to me, pleasant and interesting. In the first place, though it is the capital of an Australian colony, and therefore not yet a hundred years old, it has none of those worst signs of novelty which make the cities of the New World unpicturesque and distasteful. It is not parallelogrammic and rectangular. One may walk about it and lose the direction in which one is going. Streets running side by side occasionally converge—and they bend and go in and out, and wind themselves about, and are intricate. Philadelphia, which has not a want in the world, and is supplied with every luxury which institutions can confer upon human nature, is of all towns the most unattractive because it is so managed that every house in it has its proper place, which can be found out at once, so long as the mind of the seeker be given to ordinary arithmetic. No arithmetic will set the wanderer right in Sydney;—and this, I think, is a great advantage. I lived at 213½ in a certain street, and the interesting number chosen seemed to have no reference to any smaller numbers. There was no 1, or 5, or 20 in that street. If you live at 213 in Philadelphia, you know that you are three doors from Two Hundred and Ten Street on one side, and seven from Two Hundred and Twenty Street on the other. Information conveyed in that manner is always to me useless. I forget the numbers which I should remember, and have no aid to memory in the peculiarity either of the position or of the name.

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The public gardens at Sydney deserve more than the passing mention just made of them. The people of Australia personally are laudably addicted to public gardens,—as they are to other public institutions with which they are enabled to inaugurate the foundation of their towns, by the experience taught to them by our deficiencies. Parks for the people were not among the requirements of humanity when our cities were first built; and the grounds necessary for such purposes had become so valuable when the necessity was recognised, that it has been only with great difficulty, and occasionally by the munificence of individuals, that we have been able to create these artificial lungs for our artisans. In many of our large towns we have not created them at all. The Australian cities have had the advantage of our deficiencies. The land has been public property, and space for recreation has been taken without the payment of any cost price. In this way a taste for gardens, and, indeed, to some extent, a knowledge of flowers and shrubs, has been generated, and a humanizing influence in that direction has been produced. There are, in all the large towns,—either in the very centre of them or adjacent to them,—gardens rather than parks, which are used and apparently never abused. Those at Melbourne in Victoria are the most pretentious, and, in a scientific point of view, no doubt the most valuable. I am told that, in the rarity and multiplicity of the plants collected there, they are hardly surpassed by any in Europe. But for loveliness, and that beauty which can be appreciated by the ignorant as well as by the learned, the Sydney Gardens are unrivalled by any that I have seen. The nature of the land, with its green slopes down to its own bright little sea bay, has done much for them, and art and taste combined have made them perfect. It may be said that of all drawbacks to public parks distance is the greatest. We know that, in London, Hyde Park is but of little service to those who live at Mile End. The great park at New York, though it is connected by omnibuses with the whole city, requires an expedition to reach it. The gardens of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham are so far off from the multitude that the distance rather

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than the cost of entrance deters the crowd which might take delight in them. Even the Bois de Boulogne are too remote for daily purposes. But the gardens of Sydney are within easy reach of every street of the combined towns of Sydney and Wooloomooloo. A little beyond the gardens, almost equally near to the town, are the sea baths,—not small, dark, sequestered spots in which, for want of a better place, men and women may wash themselves, but open sea spaces, guarded by palisades from the sharks which make bathing in the harbour impracticable, large enough for swimming, and fitted up with all requisites. It is a great thing for a city to be so provided; and it is a luxury which, as far as I am aware, no other city possesses to the same degree. There is no place for bathing in England like it, or at all equal to it. That at Kingstown in Ireland is perhaps as good; but Kingstown is six or seven miles from Dublin, and has to be reached by railroad. A man or a woman may walk to the bathing-place at Sydney in a quarter of an hour.

I was much surprised at the fortifications of Sydney harbour. Fortifications, unless specially inspected, escape even a vigilant seer of sights, but I, luckily for myself, was enabled specially to inspect them. I had previously no idea that the people of New South Wales were either so suspicious of enemies, or so pugnacious in their nature. I found five separate fortresses, armed, or to be armed, to the teeth with numerous guns,—four, five, or six at each point;—Armstrong guns, rifled guns, guns of eighteen tons weight, with loop-holed walls and pits for riflemen, as though Sydney were to become another Sebastopol. I was shown how the whole harbour and city were commanded by these guns. There were open batteries and casemated batteries, shell rooms and gunpowder magazines, barracks rising here and trenches dug there. There was a boom to be placed across the harbour, and a whole world of torpedoes ready to be sunk beneath the water, all of which were prepared and ready for use in an hour or two. It was explained to me that "they" could not possibly get across the trenches, or break the boom, or escape the torpedoes, or live for an hour beneath

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the blaze of the guns. "They" would not have a chance to get at Sydney. There was much martial ardour, and a very general opinion that "they" would have the worst of it. For a time I could not gather who "they" were to be. But "indirect damages" were on men's tongues, and so I knew who were the "they" at that moment uppermost in the thoughts of my companions. It would be the same in regard to any other enemies of England, either in esse or in posse. I hope that New South Wales may never have to fight for England, and certainly that she may not have to fight America. But the feeling of loyalty in the colony is so strong that, were there a fight on hand, she would be unhappy not to be allowed to take some share in it. But, in viewing these fortifications, I was most specially struck by the loveliness of the sites chosen. One would almost wish to be a gunner for the sake of being at one of those forts.

Three different localities are combined to make Sydney. There is the old city,—old as the age of cities is as yet counted in Australia,—in which are George Street and Pitt Street, so called from George III. and his minister, running parallel to each other, from the centre. The other chief streets are all named after the old governors,—Macquarie Street, King Street, Bligh Street, Hunter Street, and Phillip Street. Among these, Macquarie Street takes a proud pre-eminence, containing the Houses of Parliament, the Treasury buildings, the entrance to Government House, and the old hospital. During a portion of its length it is built up but on one side, and looks on to the public domain—for there is a public domain or park, as well as public gardens. Indeed, according to the maps of the city, there are an inner domain and an outer domain, and a Hyde Park. To the south of these rises the important town of Wooloomooloo,—as to the remarkable spelling of which name the reader may take my assurance that I am right. Wooloomooloo has become almost as big as Sydney, and much more fashionable; and beyond Wooloomooloo, on and over various little coves of the sea,—Elizabeth Bay, and Rose Bay, and Double Bay, and Rushcutter's Bay,—cluster the various villa residences of the wealthy families. It is here that the rising

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generation of Sydney desires to dwell, and there is much to justify its choice. Then there is the "North Shore," less fashionable, but almost as beautiful as the hills round the southern coves. The North Shore has to be reached by steam ferry from Sydney Cove, which now is better known as the Circular Quay, where is congregated the shipping of the port. When the wool ships from England are here, lying in a circle all round the margin, no port has a pleasanter appearance. This is during the summer months, from October perhaps up to March. I was at Sydney both in summer and winter; but during the winter the port seemed to be deserted. Crossing the main harbour from the Circular Quay, the inhabitants of the North Shore reach their side of the town in ten minutes. Here are St. Leonard's, which is fairly fashionable; Balmuir, which is less so; and up higher, the township of Pyrmont, which will perhaps hardly excuse me if I say that it is not fashionable at all. But then, on the other hand, Pyrmont is reached by a bridge, while the inhabitants of St. Leonard's are driven to use the ferry. I can hardly complete this attempted description of the city, without explaining that the Government House stands between the Circular Quay and the public gardens, with grounds sloping down to the sea. The position is one of great beauty, and the house has an air of magnificence about it, such as should belong to the residence of a viceroy. I have been told, however, that as a house it is not as good as it should be. Looking at it with the eyes of a humble private individual, I thought that it was all that a house need be.

The antiquity of Sydney,—perhaps I should say the comparative antiquity,—strikes an Englishman as being almost absurd, as he remembers that in his father's lifetime the place was covered by gum-trees and peopled by savages. There are houses so old that they are in almost ruinous condition—seeming to be as low, as comfortless, and almost as picturesque, as do some dilapidated tenements in the old streets of our old towns. These are chiefly of wood; but the eyes become so used to wooden houses that this speciality is not observed. Two or three were pointed out to me, each

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as being the oldest in the town, and which certainly were built when the hearts of the young colonists were heavy with many troubles. Little was thought then of beauty of position, of gardens down to the water's edge, and of views over the land-locked sea. How were the inhabitants to make themselves safe against black savages, against convicts who were still more savage, and against fire? It seems that the first comers into any land have rarely thought much about scenery. Trouble as to food and security is too heavy on the minds of pioneers to allow them to indulge in the luxury of landscapes, and the taste for scenery is one of latter-day growth. In the last century Englishmen travelled to see cities, and to see men, and to study the world,—but in those days mountains were troublesome, and dark valleys were savage, and glaciers were horrible. Much is said by those who first landed at Botany Bay and Port Jackson on the trees and plants and herbs of the new country,—what I believe is now called "the Flora;" but I do not remember a word in praise of its loveliness.

Among other old buildings at Sydney there is an old church and a very old hospital. The hospital, I was assured, is quite antiquated. It seemed to be airy, easy, and as pleasant as is compatible with the nature of such an institution. St. James's Church is pewed round with high dark panels, and is as much like an English comfortless church of the last century, as though it stood in a second-rate town in an Eastern county. I went there once, and found it impossible to hear a word, either from the gentleman who read the lessons, or from him who preached. But it is a fashionable church, and is supposed to be that at which the governor and his family should say their prayers. The cathedral, on the other hand, is new, and very well arranged. I heard an excellent sermon there, in which I was told that it was the practice of St. Paul to teach his own religion rather than to abuse that of others,—a lesson which is much needed at home, and by no means unnecessary in the Australian colonies.

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CHAPTER III.

RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

It is natural that a visitor to any country should think most, and therefore speak with greatest fulness, of that sect in religion to which he himself belongs. He will be most prone to meet the pastors of that Church; and, unless he keeps his mind alert on the subject, he will,—if he be an Englishman of the Church of England,—fall into the error of thinking that the Church of England is the only important Church. The feeling is very common at home,—but even there it is a mistake. In the colonies the blunder would be much more egregious. As long as the colonies were Crown colonies, governed directly from home, a certain amount of Church of England ascendency was established. Bishops were appointed by the Crown, who still have, by virtue of their patents, some social precedence. They are recognised as titular lords,—having some stronger claim to the appellation than their Roman Catholic brother prelates. But in all these colonies every branch of the Christian religion is now supposed to stand on an equal footing,—and to have an equal title to whatever support the State may be able and willing to give. In each of the colonies the energy of the various pastors and of their flocks, and the munificence of individuals, have added something to the clerical incomes, which are for the most part provided by the voluntary payments of the people. I should only trouble my readers with unnecessary particulars were I to attempt to explain in detail the sources from which such funds have arisen, and the manner in which they have been expended; but it may perhaps interest some to know

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that there are five bishops of the Church of England in New South Wales, the Bishop of Sydney being the metropolitan for the Australian colonies, with a salary of £2,000 per annum. The total income of the clergy of the Church of England in New South Wales is £13,963 per annum,—of which £12,386 is the amount paid voluntarily by the people, and £1,576 that coming from the General Church Fund. The usual stipend of an incumbent is £200 per annum. There are 229,243 members of the Church of England in the colony.

One Roman Catholic archbishop has the Romish Church under his government, with a salary of £800 per annum. The total income of the Roman Catholic Church is £7,607 per annum, of which £6,583 is the sum derived from the subscriptions of the faithful, and £1,024 that from the Church Fund. The incomes of the parish priests are £200 or £150 per annum. There are 145,932 Roman Catholics in the colony.

The Presbyterians and Wesleyans have of course no bishops, but they also pay their ministers at the rate of about £150 each; the Presbyterians drawing altogether £326, and the Wesleyans £180, from the General Church Fund. The large remainder of the necessary sum is made up by the voluntary subscriptions of the flocks,—the Presbyterians paying £2,179 per annum, and the Wesleyans £1,572. The number of Presbyterians in the colony is 49,122, and that of Wesleyans 36,275. There are nine other Christian sects who have parish ministers and places of worship of their own, and who together number 26,447 souls. There were also two Jewish synagogues,—and there is a congregation of Christian Israelites, as to whose religious doctrines I must own myself to be altogether ignorant.

Very much praiseworthy energy has been used throughout the colonies to bring religious teaching within the reach of the people under very disadvantageous circumstances. No doubt the fact of an endowed Church at home, and the theory of endowments which was brought from home to the colonies, has given rise there as well as here to an idea that religion and religious teaching and rites should be adminis-

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tered to a people without any demand upon them for direct payment. People in Australia will commonly make it a matter of complaint that no clergyman has ever been near them, that no religious aid has ever been sent to them,—although they themselves have taken no measures and paid no money towards bringing a clergyman into their districts. For the doctor and the lawyer they know they must pay,—as the Roman Catholic knows also that he must for his priest. But the normal English Protestant,—even when dissenting from the Church of England,—thinks that his spiritual pastor should be sent to him by some unknown authority which is supposed to have such matters in keeping. If the spiritual pastor be not sent, the Protestant goes on without clerical assistance, perhaps complaining,—more probably troubling himself very little on the matter. He would go to church if there were a church near him; but if there be none within reach the fault does not rest with him, and thus his conscience is at ease. And again, the sparseness of the population and the great distances which lie between the small towns, add greatly to the difficulty. Clergymen of all denominations are, when employed in the pastoral districts, obliged to take charge of wide areas of country rather than of parishes,—of areas so wide that services can be held by each perhaps only once a fortnight, and perhaps only once a month. The travelling also is expensive, laborious, and very disagreeable. It necessarily follows that in many places there is no religious worship set on foot with clerical aid, and that squatters with their families, and their attendant shepherds, stockriders, shearers, and the like, recognise Sunday only as a day of rest.

I should, however, be wrong not to add that in New South Wales, and in the other colonies, a system has grown up under the direct sanction of the bishops of the Church of England for the performance of the Church Service by laymen. The morning prayers, with the lessons and litany, are read,—and often also a sermon. I believe that Episcopal injunctions against original sermons by laymen are very strong; but I imagine they are sometimes disobeyed. Whether the Presbyterians and Wesleyans employ lay

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readers I am unable to say. As a matter of course the Roman Catholics do not do so,—and on this account I think that the Roman Catholics as a sect are more neglected than their Protestant brethren, although they are doubtless under stricter coercion in regard to the payment of clerical dues.

I feel myself bound to record my opinion that religious teaching and the exercise of religious worship are held as being essential to civilisation and general well-being by the people of Australia. Taking the inhabitants of the colonies all through, I think the feeling is stronger there than it is at home, first and chiefly because the mass of the population is better educated,—secondly, because they who are foremost in education, rank, and society are less highly educated.

That the first should be the case will surprise no one, and will generally be admitted as a consequence, if it be allowed that the colonial education is superior to that which we have as yet achieved at home. The tendencies and influences which send children to school, send them and their parents to church also,—even though the schools be in all respect secular. Teaching produces prosperity; prosperity achieves decent garments;—and decent garments are highly conducive to church-going. Among us in England that portion of our rural population which never goes to church, and which is utterly ignorant of all religious observances, consists of the unfortunates upon whom the kindly dew of instruction has never fallen, and who have been left in almost brute-like ignorance. Among all communities in the colonies the children are taught. Wherever there is any community, however small it may be, there is a school; and where there is a school the children attend it. And almost as universally, wherever there is a community there arises a church, or more commonly churches. Though there be only two or three hundred persons within a twelve-mile circle, affording perhaps an average church attendance of less than a hundred, there will be a Presbyterian and a Roman Catholic church alongside of each other, or a Church of England and a Wesleyan church. Sometimes in a small township, containing osten-

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sibly little in the way of buildings beyond the four public-houses, the blacksmith's shop, and the bank, there will be three places of worship. The people are fond of building churches, and are proud of having them in their villages,—though they are unfortunately less addicted to pay annually for their clergyman than to defray the cost of their churches. You can, too, go in debt for a church,—but hardly for a clergyman. There is, I think, undoubtedly a general desire that the comfort and decency of religious teaching should be recognised in the colony, and this I attribute mainly to the healthy state of education.

It would be more difficult to show that a lower condition of education among the better educated classes in the colony than that which has been reached at home, should have a similar tendency, but I think that such is the case. There can be but little doubt that education among the most favoured classes at home does range higher than in the colonies. It would indeed be most disgraceful to England, with her wealth and her endowed colleges and schools, if it were not so. And it has come about as one result of such advanced teaching,—not in England only but in every country in which erudition has been valued,—that the erudite have learned to disregard and in part to dispense with the services of a priesthood. I do not say that infidelity has been thus produced,—but rather a tendency in the man's mind to think that he can best suffice to himself as his own priest. This feeling, operating from men to their wives, from fathers to sons, and from mothers to daughters,—but ever more strongly among men than women,—has in all highly intellectual communities had a certain tendency to weaken confidence in the administrations of church services. In the colonies this condition of society has hardly been yet reached. That it will come,—whether it be for good or evil,—is certain. In the meantime the absence of the condition has the tendency which I have alleged, of making the feeling in favour of religious teaching stronger among the higher classes in the colonies than it is among our higher classes at home.

I find by the statistical register of New South Wales that

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the average Sunday attendance at various places of worship amounts to something over one-third of the whole population. On 31st December, 1870, the population was 502,861, and during that year the average Sunday attendance had been 172,320.

It must be admitted on behalf of the colony, that New South Wales has supplied itself with schools on the most liberal footing; but it must be admitted also by the colony that too large a proportion of the expense of these schools has been thrust on the general taxation of the country. There are 796 public or common schools,—open to all classes, though not open without payment except under special circumstances,—of which 267 are denominational and 529 are secular. The total cost of these is £150,866 per annum, of which only £39,583 is paid by the subscriptions of the scholars, leaving the large sum of £111,283 as a burden on the revenue of the country. And it must be remembered that this is the case in a country in which the wages of artisans average 7*s.* 6*d.* and those of rural labourers 4*s.* a day. These schools are all subject to the Council of Education, and in 1870 they taught 59,814 scholars. Including those at private schools, the cost of which cannot of course be given, there were, in 1870, 74,503 scholars under tuition in the colony—a number which I think will be regarded as high for a population of half a million, which is continually being increased by the immigration of adults.

The glory of Sydney in the way of education is its University, and certainly a great deal of spirit has been shown by the colony in the creation of the institution and in the erection of the building. As regards the building, I think no one will dispute the assertion when I say that the college-hall,—or public room, for it is put to none of the comfortable festive uses for which college-halls have been built at our universities,—is the finest chamber in the colonies. If I were to say that no college either at Oxford or Cambridge possesses so fine a one, I might probably be contradicted. I certainly remember none of which the proportions are so good. In regard to the Sydney University itself, it must be

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remembered that it has been instituted simply for education, and not as a place of residence either for fellows, scholars, or commoners. It consists, therefore, of the hall, library, lecture-rooms, museum, and a residence for one of the professors. It knows nothing of gaudy days, of high tables, of sweet Latin graces, or of audit ale. It lacks the social charms to which the frequenters of Oxford and Cambridge have been accustomed; but perhaps the education on that account is not the worse, and certainly it is very much less expensive.

In a fiscal point of view, I cannot say that the university has been as yet a success. In 1870,—and I can give the figures for no later year,—the total cost of the university, consisting chiefly of the salaries of the professors, was £5,938, of which no less than £5,000 was paid from the taxes of the colony. There were but 41 scholars, whose friends contributed a trifle over £22 per annum each for their education, amounting in all to £938. But there are three professors attached to the college, each of whom enjoys an income in excess of the sum so subscribed, besides other professors less liberally remunerated.

There are also affiliated colleges, in which it is proposed that students from a distance shall live,—as they do at our English colleges,—under the charge of a Warden or Rector. Two of these have been already built, and are inhabited, by the Warden of St. Paul's, which is a Protestant establishment, and by the Rector of St. John's, which is intended for the Roman Catholics. These gentlemen's salaries, of £500 each, are paid out of the taxes; but the affiliated students have not yet come in large numbers. When I visited the university, the happy Rector of St. John's was troubled with, I think, but one inmate, whereas the Warder of St. Paul's had three or four.

I am very far, however, from intending to sneer at the Sydney University. Amidst a population so sparse, it was of course necessary that the beginning, if made at all, should be made by the government, and be paid for with government money. It has not yet had time for success. Every effort has been made to lead to success, especially in procur-

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ing first-class teachers for its service. The reputation for scholarship of Dr. Badham, the classical professor, is as high in England as it is in Sydney,—or nearly so; for in Sydney he is now regarded as the one living incontrovertible authority in all questions of Greek literature. Mr. Pell, the professor of mathematics, stands equally high in his own line. There is no institution in the colonies which excites and deserves the sympathies of an English traveller more completely than does the Sydney University.

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CHAPTER IV.

LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNMENT.

THE first parliament under which responsible government was inaugurated in New South Wales commenced its action on the 22nd of May, 1856, and the first responsible ministry came into office on the 6th of June, 1856. Sir William Denison was then governor. When he was sent to the colony, the governor really governed, having a policy of his own, in the execution of which there was not much to disturb him as long as he carried the English Secretary of State with him in his measures. But from May, 1856, all this was changed; and from that date parliamentary rule has prevailed in New South Wales. The sixth parliament is now sitting, and the fourteenth ministry was formed in 1872. Australian ministries are not long lived, and it may well be that before these pages are published Mr. Parkes, who was premier and colonial secretary when they were written, will have given way, and a fifteenth ministry,—possibly under the presidency of Sir James Martin,—will be sitting on the treasury benches. Sir James Martin and Mr. John Robertson seem to be two statesmen whose services are most generally in request by the colony. Sir James Martin has been five times attorney-general, and has three times, while holding that office, been also premier. Mr. Robertson has been in six cabinets, and has twice been premier. There can be but little doubt that a turn in the political wheel of fortune will restore them to the seats on that bench to which they are so well accustomed. The only question is as to the duration of their exclusion.

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There are many other gentlemen who are well known in the colony as parliamentary politicians—men who come into office for a time and go out, perhaps, for eternity. But as to the two whom I have mentioned, there is a feeling that they are normal ministers—gentlemen who have almost a right to be in parliament, and, being in parliament, almost a right to be in the cabinet. It is very hard to define parties in the colonial parliamentary contests, as they are defined with us. Of these two colonial statesmen, I should say that Mr. Robertson was a strong Liberal, and Sir James Martin a very strong Conservative. Mr. Robertson's name and fame are connected especially with the administration of the crown lands, in regard to which he has been regarded as the friend of the free-selecters, and therefore as the enemy of the squatters. Sir James is, I fear, a protectionist at heart. He is a proclaimed foe to separation, strong in loyalty to the Crown, very English, very confident in his own colony, perhaps a little jealous of others, very pugnacious, a consistent and thorough-going politician, and almost a Tory. He is, I think, certainly the best Australian speaker that I heard. Mr. Robertson, who was lately Sir James's colleague, but for many years his opponent, is entitled to the singular merit of having won for himself high parliamentary reputation in spite of organic impediments to speech which would have made a less energetic man dumb for life as regards all public assemblies.

When I was first in Sydney, the parliamentary question which was then exciting the minds of men in New South Wales,—and the minds of men also in Victoria,—was that of the border duties. I do not feel quite sure that these border duties would interest my readers as keenly as they interested me, or that I could in any way make the subject palatable to them. In the colonies they are of vital interest, not only from the effect they have had and must have on the intercourse between the two leading colonies, Victoria and New South Wales, but because the discussion which they are producing may probably assist in bringing about that one great measure, which is of all measures most essential to the future welfare of the colonies, a customs union which shall

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bind them together as one country in regard to duties on imported goods.

These border duties were so much in the ascendant, both when I first visited Sydney and when I returned thither, that I hardly heard other matters of much importance discussed in the New South Wales parliament. There was a divorce bill brought forward, and I then was surprised to learn that the people of New South Wales, alone among English-speaking races, are without any legalised means of separating a wife from her husband, or a husband from his wife. On this occasion the divorce bill was thrown out, and the peculiarity still remains. The practice of the British parliament as to counting out and observing the presence of strangers has been adopted, and is of course much more frequently used than it is at home. I was surprised to find how very large a proportion of the time of the House was occupied in personal discussions and appeals to the Speaker;—as to some of which I could not but feel that the gentleman had by no means a bed of roses. A Speaker in an Australian House of Assembly should be a stout man, not thin-skinned, prone rather to content himself with a low level of conduct in his House than to attempt the maintenance of high dignified decorum,—but capable of speaking a very strong word if a member should occasionally fall into a bathos lower than that low level. With some trains a driver feels that it is much to get along at all. The House at Sydney does certainly succeed in making its journeys. When there, I often felt that an exercise of some great act of authority would be useful,—that an order to the sergeant-at-arms to carry away an offending member and lock him up in some parliamentary black-hole would be beneficial. I longed for the moment to be the Speaker, that I might be authoritative. But I perceived gradually that the work did get itself done, and that the gentleman in the chair knew what he was about. I was not so sure that he was right, when on an occasion,—a new bill respecting the border duties being then in committee,—he spoke from the benches as a member of the House, not simply on the clause under discussion but with considerable party violence

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on the subject of the bill at large. I could not but think that his authority as Speaker would be injured by his descending into the political arena.

That a very commonplace man may make a fair debater was a lesson I had learned before I ever entered an Australian legislature. Such a one will not become a great orator. He will not overcome his hearers by reasons, or carry them away by passionate eloquence. But he may be very serviceable,—as flour is serviceable in the fabrication of a pudding. Indeed, a pudding with much flour and but few plums will answer its purpose better than one in which the plums have nothing to hold them together. In the House of Assembly at Sydney there was a sufficiency of farinaceous matter to prevent the plums from cloying the appetite and injuring the digestion.

The Lower House, or House of Assembly, at Sydney consists of seventy-two members. They are elected members for four years, the house being, of course, subject to dissolution by the governor,—as is our House of Commons at home. Manhood suffrage prevails, and votes are given by ballot. There is no power of scrutiny after the ballot, and I was told by many that personation of votes is common. I am inclined to think that the ballot has acted well in the colony,—serving, as it certainly has done, to preserve tranquillity at elections. I do not think that any conclusion should be drawn from this as to the expedience of the ballot in England. In New South Wales no voter is desirous of concealing his vote. It is not for secrecy,—to protect the voter from intimidation, or from bribery,—that the ballot is needed, but as a measure of police precaution for the day.

The Upper House, or Legislative Council, in Sydney is dignified and conservative. As in Queensland, the members are elected by the Crown, and are elected for life. Practically the nomination is made by the premier of the day. The great majority of the present members have sat in the Lower House, and have thus learned the use of a debating chamber before entering the Council.

The Executive Council consists of the Governor and

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seven ministers,—one of whom must be in the Legislative Council. The following are the officers who generally compose the Cabinet:—the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, the Colonial Treasurer, the Secretary for Lands, the Secretary for Public Works, and the Postmaster-General. Any one of these officers may be premier, though the premier generally chooses to be Colonial Secretary. Sir James Martin, when premier, has always been Attorney-General. Mr. Robertson was at one time premier and Secretary for Lands. The conduct of public business is almost the same as with us in England, the one exception being that the Governors have the power of reserving bills passed by the two Houses for the sanction of the home government; and that the home government, even when bills have not been so reserved, may put its veto on a bill, even when it has been passed by the two Houses and the Governor, at any time within two years of the date of its receipt by the Secretary of State.

By the last census, taken in 1871, the population of New South Wales was 503,981. At the beginning of 1872, the revenue was £2,218,699. Of this sum, £1,729,722 was made up by taxation, and £497,977 was revenue derived from the sale and lease of crown lands. The public debt was £10,614,330, and the interest of the debt was £530,514 per annum;—thus requiring every individual in the colony to bear a burden of about £1 per annum on its account. It must, however, be explained that nearly all the money so borrowed has been expended on public works,—such as roads and railways, and that the sum expended on railways, amounting to £6,500,000, returns an interest of nearly 2½ per cent. in the shape of profit. It can hardly be boasted on behalf of the colony that this outlay of money has been directly remunerative, as we know that 7½ per cent. is nearer to the mark of normal interest in New South Wales; but when we consider the general good that is done by an easy means of transit to a community in which the ordinary means are difficult, slow, and expensive, we can hardly look upon the debt in the light of a national incubus, as we should do had the money been laid out on the current

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expenses of the year, or in defraying the charges of past extravagance.

The total payment demanded from every inhabitant is higher than it is at home. With us it is less than £2 10*s.* a head. In New South Wales it is very nearly £3 10*s.* a head,—after giving the colony the advantage of the sum derived from the lease and sale of crown lands; but £3 10*s.* a head is not nearly so heavy a burden in the colonies as is £2 10*s.* in England. The rate of rural wages throughout Great Britain is not above 14*s.* a week, whereas in New South Wales it averages about 24*s.*

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CHAPTER V.

COUNTRY TOWNS, RAILWAYS, AND ROADS.

THE country towns of Australia, generally, are not attractive, and it is hardly to be expected that they should as yet be so. There are, of course, exceptional instances,—Ballaarat, Geelong, and Beechworth in Victoria are exceptions, as are also Launceston in Tasmania, and Strathalbyn and Mount Gambier in South Australia, which, from peculiarity of situation or the energy of individuals, have become either well-built cities or pleasant little towns. No doubt there are others which I was not able to visit. But, generally, there is a raw newness about these congregations of houses, an initiation of streets which as yet are no more than initiated, a deficiency in pavement and macadamisation which leads either to dust or mud, an apparent mixture of pretension and failure which is indeed indispensable to towns founded with hopes of future greatness, but which creates a feeling of melancholy sadness in the mind of a stranger. It could hardly have been otherwise, and yet it grieves us to see that they who have diligently made their plans, intending to produce comfort, social neatness, and sometimes even urban magnificence, should as yet have succeeded in producing only discomfort, untidiness, and insignificance. In old countries, such as our own, towns have grown up almost without an intention on the part of any founder. Cities have formed themselves out of villages, because it has first suited first this man and then that to earn his bread in this or that locality. Consequently our

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streets have been narrow and crooked, our spaces confined and often ill arranged, and our supplies of water and air insufficient for an increasing population. We are daily compelled to pull down that we may rebuild,—and are almost angry with ourselves or with those who went before us, in that there has been so little foresight among us as to the wants of mankind. But it has resulted from all this that we are not, as a rule, incomplete, pretentious, or unpicturesque. The new countries, however, have taken a lesson from the deficiencies of the old countries, and have commenced their towns on a certain plan, with wide streets, and large spaces, and straight long lines, so that coming generations of thronging men may be able to build their houses in spots properly prepared, and to move about without knotting themselves into inconvenient crowds as men have to do in the old cities. When the generations shall have come, this will be very well, and the wisdom of the founders will be acknowledged;—but in the meantime the new towns are ugly, and generally dirty.

They who have travelled in the United States beyond the big cities,—who have seen something besides New York, Boston, and Chicago,—must have felt this ugliness very strongly. It was the appreciation of this deformity, excited to its greatest intensity by the unfortunate youthfulness of the place then under inspection, and by the imagination of the artist, which produced that picture of a town in the wilderness which Dickens painted and called Eden. The founders of his Eden had sought the confluence of two great navigable rivers, and had planned long quays and broad streets;—but, up to Dickens's day, had produced nothing but mud and ague. I have seen no Australian town so bad as Eden, which certainly when I visited it still deserved all the evil things which have been said of it. Such a picture of any Australian town, even if I could draw it, would be untrue. But I cannot say that as yet these communities possess many beauties to recommend them to the eye, or have much to please a stranger.

And yet in these towns there is ample evidence of energy. The population of such places may be said to vary from

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7,000 to 500, the great majority having less than 2,000 inhabitants. Exclusive of Sydney there are but six towns in the whole colony of New South Wales which have a population over 2,000, and of these four, Newcastle, Maitland, Paramatta, and Bathurst, have a population varying from 5,000 to 7,500. In all these towns,—even in places with less than 500 souls,—there is a bank. In most of them there are two or three banks. In all these there is a church;—in most of them there are churches. The hotels are more numerous even than the banks and churches, and,—though I heard them abused as inns are always abused in all countries,—I found them fairly comfortable, and very much better than I had expected from the sparseness of the population over so wide a district. Almost all inns in Australia, however small, have a bath-room, though it may be of rude construction. I wish I could convey this information to hotel-keepers in England. I found, too, that the shops were better than they looked, and that the means of comfortable life were to be found in towns which were not attractive in their appearance.

In New South Wales many of the towns have been absolutely created by the gold-fields, and are still being created. Some of the gold-field towns are already in a state of decay, and are almost passing away. Still something of life remains, but of all the sad places I ever saw they are the most melancholy. They are "bush" towns. Readers who desire to understand anything of Australian life should become acquainted with the technical meaning of the word "bush." The bush is the gum-tree forest, with which so great a part of Australia is covered, that folk who follow a country life are invariably said to live in the bush. Squatters who look after their own runs always live in the bush, even though their sheep are pastured on plains. Instead of a town mouse and a country mouse in Australia, there would be a town mouse and a bush mouse,—but mice living in the small country towns would still be bush mice. A young lady when she becomes engaged to a gentleman whose avocations call upon him to live far inland always declares she prefers "bush life."

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The mining towns are composed of the sudden erections which sprang from the finding of gold in the neighbourhood, and are generally surrounded by thick forest. But in their immediate vicinity the trees have been cut down either for firewood or for use under ground,—but have not been altogether cleared away, so that the hideous stumps remain above the surface. Around on all sides the ground has been stirred in the search for gold, and ugly bare heaps of clay are left. The road to and from such a place will meander causelessly between yawning holes, in each of which some desponding miner has probably buried his high hopes,—and which he has then abandoned. One wonders that every child in the neighbourhood does not perish by falling into them. At different points around the centre, which have once been supposed to be auriferous, there are the skeleton remains of wooden habitations, with here and there the tawdry sign-boards of deserted shops from which high profits were once expected. In some few of these skeleton habitations there are still inhabitants,—men and women who having a house have been unwilling to leave it, even when the dreadful fact that gold is not to be found in paying quantities has been acknowledged. In the centre there is still the town, though day by day its right to the name is passing from it. There are still the publicans, and still the churches,—though the services become rare and still more rare,—and there is the bank holding its position as long as an ounce of gold is to be extracted from the unwilling soil. Here congregate Chinese in gangs, who are content to rewash the ground which has already been perhaps twice washed by European or Australian Christians, and who, with the patient industry which is peculiar to them, will earn perhaps each 1*s.* 6*d.* a day by the process. I will name no such town, because by doing so I might offend the susceptibilities of some still-hopeful denizens of the place specified, but they are easy to find by those who travel in New South Wales. There are, however, other mining towns in the colony full of life. Men are still crowding to them; and at these habitations cannot be put up fast enough to cover the eager seekers after wealth, nor

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shops opened quick enough to supply their wants. Of them I will say a few words in another chapter.

Other towns, and they probably the best and most enduring of the country towns of New South Wales, have been built in the wheat districts,—in those parts of the colony which have been found most fitted for cereal produce. Among these are Maitland, Bathurst, Goulbourn, Armidale, Albury,—and Wagga Wagga, celebrated for ever in the annals of the colony as having been once the residence of the great Tichborne claimant. Maitland and Goulbourn I did not visit,—of Bathurst I cannot speak otherwise than kindly, because of the kindness I received there. It stands in a fertile plain, just across that range of Blue Mountains which in the early days of the colony were so cruelly inaccessible to the first settlers. When at last their energies prevailed they got down upon the happy wheat-bearing land through which the Macquarie runs, where the town of Bathurst now stands with its broad streets and numerous churches. Bathurst has 5,030 inhabitants. There must surely be room there for treble the number,—so spacious is it, and so great are the distances. Truth compels me to state that the mud in their streets can be very deep in wet weather.

Newcastle, in population and importance, is second to Sydney. It is essentially a city of coal. As I must speak again of the coal of the colony, I need do no more here than mention the name. It remains that I should say a word in honour of Paramatta, the city of oranges, and the scene of some of the greatest efforts made by the early settlers to obtain subsistence from the ungrateful soil of the districts adjacent to Sydney. The Paramatta River,—called by the natives by that or by some similar name,—runs down into Sydney harbour, and on this river, about fifteen miles above the city, now stands the pleasant and almost old-fashioned little town. It is quite unlike any other colonial place of the same size, having been established before the new order of things had commenced,—when men were struggling for existence rather than thinking of sanitary arrangements and future grandeur. The early colonists tried to grow wheat

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here and failed. Those who have come since have planted oranges and have made money. Now Paramatta is known far and wide for its fruit,—so that no man or woman is supposed to have seen Sydney aright who has not visited Mr. Pye's orange groves, and shaken hands with Mrs. Pye, who in the matter of conserved oranges stands far above all competitors in any country. Either the soil or the climate, or both together, contain the requisites, whatever they may be, for this peculiar growth, so that neither Jamaica nor the South of Spain, not Malta or the Havanna, can beat Paramatta in this especial article of produce. And as a consequence the consumption of oranges is very great throughout all the colonies. December and January are the months in which they culminate, but they are picked ripe throughout the entire year. On the 1st of July, in the very middle of winter, I ate fresh-picked oranges in Sydney which were ripe and perfectly sweet, and at the same period of the year they are exported in great numbers. At Paramatta I found an hotel so like an old English country inn,—that when there I could hardly believe that I was in the colony. But Paramatta, like Sydney, is not a mushroom, as are other colonial towns, but has an old history and savours of the last century. Steamers ply to it up the Paramatta River, and it lies also on the Sydney and Bathurst Railway,—so that it may almost be regarded as a suburb of the city.

In New South Wales there are three lines of railway nearly equal in length, comprising altogether 394 miles. The amount does not seem much for so great a country;—but it must be remembered that the very distances create the difficulty. The population is scattered so far and wide that the towns to be connected are too small to pay for railway traffic. The Great Northern starts from Newcastle, and runs up through the coal district to Maitland, Singleton, and Musclebrook. The average cost per mile of this line was £13,000, and it is carried over 124 miles. The Great Western and the Great Southern,—it is of course necessary that the English pattern should be followed, and that all railways shall be Great,—are one and the same from Sydney as far as Paramatta. This morsel of railway, 14 miles in length,

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the first opened in the colony, cost no less than £50,000 a mile to construct it, the total sum expended on it being six times the amount originally subscribed by a private company to make the entire railway to Goulbourn, a distance of 135 miles! At Paramatta the lines diverge, the Southern branch going to Goulbourn, and the Western across the Blue Mountains to Bathurst. The latter crosses the Nepean River at Penrith, and immediately ascends the hills. It is taken up by a zigzag ascent, and after running 60 miles through the mountains, by the only passable track which they afford even for foot travellers, it is brought down again by another zigzag. On the ascent from the Nepean the steepest gradient is 1 in 30;—on the descent towards Bathurst it is 1 in 42. The whole work is said to be, and appears to be, a wonderful feat of engineering enterprise,—and is not the less so certainly because it cost £25,000 a mile; whereas the portion of the line between Sydney and Paramatta, which cost double the money, runs through a perfectly flat country. The scenery through the Blue Mountain ranges is so grand, that the traveller should not content himself with looking at it from a railway carriage. There are three or four points on the line at which he should stay a few hours, and explore the defiles around him. The ranges which are so passed run all the length of the eastern side of Australia, dividing a narrow strip of land along the sea-shore from the huge plains of the interior. From Paramatta the Southern line branches to Goulbourn, also passing the ranges,—but doing so at a spot in which the ascent is conparatively insignificant. But in this work also the gradients for three consecutive miles are 1 in 30. The line to Goulbourn from Paramatta cost £13,000 a mile.

The total cost of the railways in New South Wales up to the end of 1871 had been £6,532,184, and in that year the receipts taken on the 394 miles open were £365,322. The working expenses were £197,065, and the net profit on the sum expended £158,257, giving an interest on the capital invested of 2·42 per cent. These railways are exclusively in the hands of the government, are made with public money, and are managed by a minister of state,—as are the post-

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office and electric telegraph with us. The greater portion of the debt of the colony has been borrowed for the purpose, and has been so expended. As 7½ per cent. may perhaps be named as the present normal rate of interest in the colony, it cannot be said that the business is directly remunerative as a speculation. The railways are still being extended, and it may probably be long before any material increase in the rate of direct profit will be realised;—but that adequate profit of an indirect nature is realised, amply sufficient to justify the outlay, no one I think can doubt.

Nevertheless, these railways are open to an objection which strikes an Englishman very forcibly. With a few exceptions as to short lines for local traffic, all the Australian railways have been made by the Australian government, and have necessarily been made under the authority of centralized officials. When it is determined to spend a million on railways, some individual has to determine whether the money shall be expended for the advantage of this or that district. No doubt the proposition must be sanctioned by parliament, but we all know what is the power of a man "in power;" and we know also how prone such men are to use their power, perhaps unconsciously, towards the promotion of their own parliamentary interest. They who do not know it would soon be taught the lesson by a visit to the Australian colonies. When a change of government is effected, and a new set of men obtains possession of the treasury bench, the happy localities by whom the new ministers are sent to parliament immediately become assured that roads and bridges will be showered upon them, and they become loudly expectant of railways. But these benefits are to be procured by money subscribed by the colony at large, which should therefore be expended on behalf of the colony at large. When the member for Wonga-jonga becomes the honourable Secretary for Public Works, it is a matter of course that the inhabitants of the Wonga-jonga district should expect great things; and it is almost equally a matter of course that the Secretary for Public Works should do, if not great things, at least little things. He will do probably as little as may suffice to secure his popularity; but he will hardly be able to forget alto-

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gether his own interests in his public duty, and he certainly will not be encouraged to forget his own interests by the general feeling which prevails around him.

Nor would it be possible for any minister, let his sense of duty be ever so strong, to adjust the expenditure of public money on local objects so as to deal fairly with all by whom the money is subscribed. Consequently there is a continued outcry that money is unfairly spent. None of the railways of New South Wales confer any appreciable benefit on the inhabitants of the great Riverinan district, or on the district of Illawarra, which lies south from Sydney along the coast; but Riverina and Illawarra pay as much towards the Bathurst and Goulbourn railways as do the localities benefited. Consequently a certain amount of suspicion and distrust is the necessary consequence of the system adopted.

The ordinary roads of New South Wales would probably more thoroughly astonish an Englishman hitherto altogether ignorant of the condition of the colonies than any other phenomenon that he would meet. The extreme length of the colony along the seaboard is 900 miles, and its mean breadth about 500 miles. It is about three times the size of Great Britain and Ireland, and larger than any state in Europe except Russia. Throughout the whole of this enormous country there are but 604 miles of metalled roads, by far the majority of which are closely adjacent to the towns. In the island of Ceylon, which has not been in our possession longer than New South Wales, and which is smaller than Ireland, there are 2,606 miles of principal roads, all of which are metalled and completed. Ceylon is a Crown colony, in which everything is done by almost despotic rule, whereas New South Wales enjoys the privilege of representative government.

I trust it may not be thought that I make this comparison as tending to show that a Crown colony is in a more blessed state than one under representative government, or that the native races of Ceylon are in a happier condition generally than the people of New South Wales. In Ceylon the labourers on the roads receive, I am told, about 1*s.* 2*d.* a day, and they live upon rice. Roads may therefore be made cheaply.

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In New South Wales the road-makers eat meat three times a day, and are paid certainly not less than 4*s.* a day. Roads, therefore, are costly. The contrast, however, will serve to show how very small a portion of the free colony has received an accommodation which we at home regard as one of the primary requisites of civilised life.

In addition to the 604 miles of completed road, there are 1,255 other miles in different states of incompletion, of which the majority, in the summer of 1872 had been simply cleared. The lines had been surveyed, and the forest-trees had been cut down. As a consequence of this condition of things, journeys are made over forest-tracks, and are made so constantly, and with such a fair amount of average punctuality, that the traveller is at last driven to ask himself whether, after all that has been said on the subject, roads are a necessity.

This travelling through the endless forest of gum-trees is very peculiar, and at first attractive. After awhile it becomes monotonous in the extreme. There is a great absence of animal life. One may go all day through a pastoral country without seeing even a sheep. Now and again one hears the melancholy note of the magpie, or the unmelodious but cheerful gobble of the laughing jackass, and sometimes the scream of a cockatoo; but even birds are not common. Travellers one meets occasionally,—a man on horseback, with his swag before him on his saddle, or a line of drays drawn by bullocks, or perhaps a squatter in his buggy,—but they are few and far between. The road, such as it is, consists of various tracks, running hither and thither, and very puzzling at first to a "new chum"—till he learns that all these tracks in the bush are only deviations of one road. When the bullock-drays have so cut up a certain passage that the ruts are big enough and deep enough to swallow up a buggy or to overset the stage-coach, the buggies and the stage-coach make another passage, from which they move again when the inevitable bullock-drays have followed them. The government shows its first care on these roads in making bridges over the streams, but even bridges are not absolutely essential. With some rough contrivance, when any

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contrivance is absolutely necessary, the vehicles descend and ascend the banks, though the wheels be down to the nave in mud. Over many of these bush roads, Cobb's coaches travel day and night, passing in and out through the trees, up and down across the creeks, sticking here and there in the mud, in a rough, uneasy, but apparently not very insecure fashion. Now and then one hears that a coach has been upset, and that the passengers have been out in the bush all night; but one very rarely hears that any one has been hurt, unless it be the coachman. The average pace of the travelling in New South Wales is about six miles an hour.

But more go in their own buggies than by coach, and perhaps more on horseback than in buggies. In Australia every one keeps horses;—every squatter keeps horses by the dozen; and a buggy is as necessary a part of his establishment as a dinner-table. These vehicles are either American or are built on the American plan, and are admirably adapted for bush work. They are very light, and go over huge logs and across unfathomable ruts almost without feeling them. To upset them seems to be an impossibility. They are constantly being broken,—hopelessly broken to the mind of an ignorant stranger; but they go on apparently as well without a pole as with one, and are indifferent to bent axles and injured wheels. There are always yards of rope at hand, and supplementary timber can be cut from the next tree. Many scores of miles through the bush I have travelled in these buggies,—and have sometimes felt the hours to pass by very slowly; but though there have been no roads,—nothing that in England would be called a road,—I have encountered no injury, nor have I been aware of any danger.

But the pleasantest mode of bush travelling is on horseback. It is open to this objection,—that you can carry nothing with you but what can be strapped on to your saddle before you. Two changes of linen, a night-shirt, a pair of trousers, with hair-brush, tooth-brush, and a pair of slippers, is about as much as can be taken. But, on the other hand, bush-life requires but little in the way of dress, and a man

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travelling on horseback is held to be exempt from rules which he should observe if he travelled in a buggy. The squatter travelling alone through the country generally takes two horses, leading one and riding the other, and in this way makes very long journeys. The work which Australian horses will do when immediately taken off the grass is very surprising. I have ridden forty, fifty, and even as much as sixty-four miles a day,—the whole weight on the animal's back being over seventeen stone, and have come to the end of the day's work without tiring the horse. According to the distance to be done, and the number of consecutive days during which you require your steed to travel, will be your pace. The fastest which I ever did from morning to evening was eight miles an hour throughout, resting two hours and journeying eight; but six miles an hour will perhaps be the average rate. The stories, however, that we hear are very wonderful,—for, in matters of horseflesh, gentlemen in Australia do not hide their lights under bushels. I have heard men boast of doing ten miles an hour for ten hours running; and one very enterprising horseman assured me that he had ridden seventy-five miles in four hours. The bush horses are, generally, not shod,—though I would always recommend shoeing for a long journey,—and are very rarely stabled. They are expected,—to use a bush phrase,—to cut their own bread and butter, or, in other words, to feed themselves by foraging. The two paces which are commonly adopted by horsemen in the bush are walking and cantering. Men seldom trot, and consequently many horses altogether lose, or never acquire, the habit of trotting. I have been assured that Australian horses will get over the ground at a fast pace with greater ease to themselves by a continual canter than by changing that pace for a trot. That such a theory is altogether wrong, I have not the slightest doubt. I have found in Australia, as all horsemen know in England, that horses carrying heavy weights will make much longer journeys if made to trot than they can do if required to canter hour after hour. The canter is the easier pace to the man, and therefore it has been adopted. Not uncommonly a horse will knock up with his rider on the road. On

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such occasions the rider turns into the nearest squatter's station, and borrows another. The fact that everybody's horses, and everybody's saddles and bridles, are always at somebody else's house and never at the owner's, is one of the most remarkable and perhaps not least pleasing phases of Australian life. Nevertheless it tends to some confusion.

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CHAPTER VI.

LAND.

It must be remembered that, at the commencement of colonization in Australia, all land was the property of the Crown,—and that on the transfer in each colony of the power of government from the Crown to representative institutions, the land became the property of that colony, except in regard to such comparatively small tracts as had been already alienated to individuals. In other words, the land from the beginning has been held in trust, to be administered for the benefit of those who have ventured to go to it and to look to it for their future means of subsistence. Great difference of opinion has existed among men as to the way in which this trust should be administered, and undoubtedly many mistakes have been made. Equally without doubt, I fear, the trust has been occasionally betrayed by grants of land which there has been nothing to justify. Sales, too, have been made with partiality,—so that land has been transferred to the favoured for sums much less than it is worth in the open market. And political influences have been brought to bear upon the disposition of land, concessions having been made to the supporters of one interest at the expense of those who have been regarded as opponents. These differences of opinion have been so wide, the mistakes made have been so serious, the breaches of trust have been felt to be so obvious by men who have not themselves been favoured, and the political jobbing has been a thorn so sharp in the side of those who have considered themselves to be injured, that

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the matter in the colonies is discussed on all sides as though the only principle on which it was possible to act,—that of the land being in truth the property of colonists who would go and use it,—had been forgotten, thrown over, and abandoned. But the principle has never been forgotten and has never been abandoned. The adherence to it has perhaps been as close as has been compatible with the customary infirmities of human administrators. Under the old despotic governors, and under the government as since carried on by parliamentary ministers, there has ever been an attempt at a system founded on this principle. Mr. Wakefield's idea that the land should be sold for a price, and not given away, has been fully adopted. The idea of those who generally agreed with him, that the money so obtained should be expended on emigration, has been partially tried, but has fallen to the ground. The price paid for the land has become a part of the revenue of the colony, and has in this way been used for the benefit of those who paid it. It is now a fixed rule in all the Australian colonies that the public lands shall be sold to those who desire to buy them, in accordance with certain laws,—and that these laws shall settle the price, the area that may be bought, the way in which it shall be selected, the amount of credit that shall be given, and the terms as to residence and cultivation, by a compliance with which the purchase may at last be completed. These laws have been made with the expressed object of dealing fairly not only with the would-be purchasers of the land, but also with the interests of a set of men who, by their capital and energy, have gradually become the ascendant class or aristocracy of Australia. It must be remembered always that the would-be purchasers have rarely, if ever, proposed to settle themselves on lands altogether unoccupied. There have been settlers before them who have used the land, but who, while using it, were under no necessity to possess it. These were patriarch squatters,—owners of sheep who drove their flocks on the public pastures, and "squatted" on the land, conscious that it was not their own, but conscious also that by taking such temporary occupation they were making

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themselves the pioneers of civilisation, and were legitimately carrying on the true purposes of colonisation. It is not too much to say, that all the early success of Australia was due to the squatters of New South Wales, who followed the steps of Captain Macarthur, the man who introduced merino sheep into Australia. At first the sheep of the squatters ran free,—but it was soon recognised as a fact that as the foraging of sheep was profitable, the graziers should pay some rent for the land,—the land so used being still the property of the colony and not the property of the graziers. Then it became necessary not only that a rental should be fixed, but also terms arranged as to the continuance of the lease. I have not heard that in New South Wales there has been much heart-burning as to the price demanded;—but there has been much as to the continuance of the squatter's holding. The squatter's pastoral run has been made fairly his own, as against other squatters, but it has been opened by law to the choice of the free-selecter. Any would-be farmer may take a bit here or a bit there, may choose the choice water-holes of the run without which the sheep cannot be pastured, may make his own of any portion of the squatter's holding. And ten, twenty, forty free-selecters may make their own of as many portions of it till they absolutely take his pastures from him. And perhaps this is not the worst aspect of the squatter's case. The man who comes and calls himself a free-selecter may at heart, and in very deed, be no farmer at all,—but a professional thief intent on living on his neighbour's goods. Or he may be joint farmer and thief,—growing perhaps a little maize and a few pumpkins, but still having an eye to the squatter's sheep or the squatter's oxen. That there is very much of such theft in New South Wales is certain, and also that it is very difficult to punish the offender. The flocks are so numerous and the spaces so vast, that it is often long before the stolen animals are missed, and often impossible to bring evidence against the thief, although the squatter knows well where his beef and mutton have gone. And there is another evil-minded free-selecter who is very odious to the squatter. This man purchases his tract of land, something

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between 40 and 320 acres, simply in order that he may be broght out. He knows that he can be so disagreeable as a neighbour, that his neighbour will be fain to buy him out. He also succeeds, too often, to the great grief of the squatter. The squatters urge that they had leases or promises of leases which should have preserved them for a term of years, and that their rights were ignored by new laws. I found the question to be very intricate in New South Wales, and I do not know that I can do any service by expressing an opinion one way or the other. Land ministers in New South Wales have been confident in proving to me that no existing rights were ever infringed by the operation of a new land law. Squatters have been equally confident in proving to me that their rights were altogether ignored, and that the terms made with them were infringed. I have endeavoured to believe both when listening to them, and do not doubt that they all were proclaiming truths undoubted to themselves. In speaking of Victoria I shall be obliged to return to this subject,—for in Victoria I think that the squatter's rights, as confirmed by one law, were taken from them by a subsequent law. I mention the matter in regard to New South Wales in order that the reader may understand some of the difficulties with which the distribution of the public lands has been surrounded. The professed object of the land laws has been so to adjust the disposal of the public lands as to attract small purchasers without injustice to the great squatters, and I believe that this object has been truly sought by those who have framed these laws in New South Wales.

When I was first at Sydney, a new land law was in the hands of the government,—which had then come hot from the brain of the indefatigable Mr. Robertson. It contained eighty-four clauses, and each clause required study for its comprehension,—so complicated is the subject. I was told that I could not hope to understand the bill unless I mastered all the details of the existing land law. I did my best, believing that the new bill would become a good law. But when I returned to Sydney, Mr. Robertson and Sir James Martin had fallen, and the new land bill with its

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eighty-four clauses had been shoved aside into pigeon-holes.

Under the existing law any would-be purchaser may select in New South Wales not less than 40, or more than 320 acres,—the price being 20*s.* an acre. Of this sum he pays down one-fourth,—£25 we will say for 100 acres. He then enters in upon possession, and no further claim for payment is made upon him for three years. At the end of that time he may pay the other three-fourths, as to which no interest is charged against him for those three years. If he does so, and can satisfy the officials of the land office by certain declarations that he has complied with expressed stipulations as to residence and expenditure of money on improvements, the fee-simple of the land is made over to him. But this the free-selecter need not do,—and very rarely does. He may pay the outstanding 75 per cent. of his purchase-money and get his title-deeds, but he need not do so. Instead of that he may pay 5 per cent. interest on the debt for an indefinite term of years, having the while the undisturbed use of his land; and as his money is worth to him more than 5 per cent., this is what he does do. The farmer, therefore, in New South Wales with 100 acres of land will have paid £25 down, will have had the use of his land without further payment for three years, and will then pay a rental of £3 15*s.* a year,—which obligation he can terminate at any time by paying down a further sum of £75.

The terms seem to be very easy, but yet, as far as I could learn, the free-selecters in New South Wales are not so prosperous a class as one would wish to find them. It must be remembered in the first place that they enter in upon their land in its rough state, unfenced, and probably with heavy timber on it. They then become almost invariably subject to, I will not say ill-usage, but hostility from their richer neighbours. No doubt they can retaliate,—and can injure the squatter much more materially than the squatter can injure them. They can steal, and if provoked can set fire to fences. They can sell grog, either with or without a licence; and a grog-shop in the vicinity of his station is

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regarded by the squatter as one of the most grievous injuries which can be inflicted on him. But the state of hostility which is thus engendered cannot tend to the man's comfort or to his material advantage. The climate, however, is the most severe enemy which the free-selecter has to encounter in New South Wales. Land capable of producing cereals he can obtain, but through the uncertainty of the climate he cannot be secure of his crop. Once in three years his crop is good,—but twice in three years it will hardly pay the price of production. In the year ending 31st March, 1870, there were in New South Wales 189,452 acres under wheat, and the crop amounted to nearly 17 bushels an acre. That was a good year. Nevertheless the area under wheat sank in the next year to 147,997 acres, and the produce did not amount to 7 bushels an acre. That was a very bad year. Wages are so high,—averaging never less than 24*s.* a week, including the cost of board, when labour is hired only for a short time,—that unless a farmer can do his work with his own family, he will be worse off than his own labourer. And then his markets are probably far from home, and the roads to them are very bad. The condition in which the free-selecter of New South Wales seemed to thrive the best was that in which the farmer, who is his own master and perhaps the employer of labour during a part of the year, condescends to be the paid servant of a master during another portion, and to take the squatter's wages for work done in the wool-shed or at the washpool. I should have added, when stating the terms on which the free-selecter obtains his land, that he is entitled by his initiated purchase to certain grazing rights. He has such privilege under the existing law; but this arrangement has been found to work so prejudicially both to the selecter and to the squatter,—adding a fresh ground of contention between the two,—that by the new bill to which I have alluded, that privilege would have been abandoned, under the conviction that it had done more harm than good.

I am far, however, from expressing an opinion that the cause of the free-selecters should be given up in New South Wales, or that efforts made to attract such a class should

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not be continued. It is by the influx of such men that the labour market of the colony must be maintained, and the body and life of the colony be supported. The condition of the free-selecter,—that of ownership of a piece of land to be tilled by the owner,—is the one which the best class of immigrants desire. It is the hope of attaining this condition which tempts men to come, such as all colonies are desirous of possessing. It is impossible not to sympathize with the efforts of colonial law-makers to assist the growth of such bone and blood in the body of the colony with which they have to deal. As time goes on the sheep-stealing and the cattle-stealing, which are less rife than they were ten years since, will become exceptional as they are with us. And as time goes on the gradual improvement of the climate which follows occupation, and the creation of roads, and increased skill in farming, will all tell in favour of the free-selecter. In describing the present condition of this most interesting of all colonists I have endeavoured to paint the picture as I saw it.

When describing the manner in which the public lands are alienated by the colonist on behalf of the colony, I should also state the terms under which the runs of the squatters are let to them. Leases are now granted for terms of five years, which are renewable. The tenure under these leases is in fact so good that a squatter buys or sells the right to pasture on a run without fear of interference or loss of his grazing ground at the expiration of the term. But the lease affords no protection to the squatter against free-selecters. The rent demanded from him is calculated after a complicated and no doubt most sagacious fashion which I cannot explain, as I have failed to understand it. Practically he pays about *2d.* a sheep. In the assessment of his rent 200 head of cattle are supposed to be equal to 1,000 sheep. The payment demanded by the government from the squatter in New South Wales is not above a fourth of that exacted in Victoria.

The squatter himself is almost invariably a free-selecter, as he buys the ground on which his homestead stands, and his water frontage, and horse paddock, and wool-shed, to

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save them from other free-selecters. Not unfrequently he goes much further than this, and by calling in the aid of friends and dependants, makes large purchases, which are entirely opposed to the spirit of the act. For the land laws here, as in all these colonies, have been framed with the view of preventing,—though they have never succeeded in preventing,—the accumulation of large domains in the hands of territorial magnates. I must add here that there are large landowners in the colony whose title-deeds are more ancient than any of the laws which now regulate the sale of lands. In the early days of New South Wales vast grants of land were made to early colonists who undertook the charge of convicts,—were made, too, sometimes under other circumstances not always with strict impartiality. These grantees, or more frequently their descendants, still own the estates thus conferred, and are exempt from rent, and exempt also from selecters. There are others, too, who have purchased large properties. But the bulk of the land of the colony is still the property of the colony. At the close of 1870, 8,437,638 acres had been alienated in the colony,—but there were still left 104,618,436 acres unsold.

In 1872 there were no fewer than 3,495 pastoral holdings, or runs held under the Crown in New South Wales. It should, however, be explained that one squatter generally holds two or three of these runs, and not unfrequently one squatter or one firm of squatters will hold eight or ten. In Queensland there were in the same year 2,310. In Victoria only 973,—the comparative smallness of the number being due to the fact that the greater part of the pastoral land in that colony has been already purchased. In South Australia there are 778 runs. The small number is there due, as far as I could learn, to the fact that the land has been taken up in larger tracts than in the other colonies.

At the end of this volume will be found a digest of the present land laws of New South Wales, as far as they refer to free-selection. This is taken from MacPhaile's Australian Squatting Directory, published at Melbourne.

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CHAPTER VII.

MEAT.

By the latest returns which I could get before leaving the colonies, I found that there were in Australia 4,340,638 horned cattle and 41,366,263 sheep. In these numbers the cattle and sheep of New Zealand are not included. In Great Britain and Ireland, at the beginning of 1872, there were 9,346,216 horned cattle and 31,403,500 sheep. The population of Australia then amounted, in round numbers, to 1,700,000. That of Great Britain and Ireland to 32,000,000. There was therefore for every 100 of the population in Australia over 250 cattle and over 2,400 sheep; and for every 100 at home less than 30 head of cattle, and less than 100 sheep. In other words, every Australian has 2½ head of horned cattle and 24 sheep to his or her own share, whereas every Briton staying at home has but a third of a bullock and one sheep. The price of meat ranges from *2d.* to *4d.* a pound in Australia, ranging perhaps from *8d.* to *1s.* in England. At the same time the wages of a labouring man in Australia are about double the wages of his brother at home. Consequently the labouring man, let his labour be what it may, eats meat three times a day in the colonies, and very generally goes without it altogether at home. That is a plain and, I think, a true statement of the case. In regard to almost all other necessaries of life such great inequality of price and consumption is prevented by the easy transport of the article produced. The price of wheat nearly equalises itself in all the great cities of the world. Tea, sugar, cloth-

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ing, spirits, and tobacco are carried about so readily, that any difference in their prices is due rather to the fiscal necessities of the country importing them, than to the cost or difficulty of carrying them. But meat has hitherto been an exception to this rule,—from a cause that is manifest to every one. It becomes decomposed, and is destroyed by contact with the air. Hence has arisen the very important question, —important equally to the countries which have too much meat, and to those which have not enough,—whether the skill of man cannot devise some plan by which meat can be carried as securely, and at the same time as cheaply, as other commodities.

The glut of meat, or rather of meat-giving animals, in the colonies, has been so great, that for many years past flocks and herds have been boiled down to produce simply tallow, —because tallow can be easily exported. In 1870 there were, in the one colony of New South Wales, 48 boiling-down establishments, at which in the previous year 290,550 sheep and 246 bullocks were converted into 67,175 cwt. of tallow. The carcases of all these animals, for any other purpose than that of giving tallow, were absolutely wasted, while we at home were paying 11*s.* or 12*s.* for a leg of mutton, or going without the mutton because we could not afford to pay for it.

In circumstances such as these, the wit of man has, of course, been set to work to devise plans by which the meat might be taken to the market. Hence have arisen various meat-preserving companies, some of which I visited in Queensland, and have spoken of them in my account of that colony. The difficulty of sending meat home that shall be eatable has been easily overcome. The sheep and oxen are slaughtered. The meat is cut roughly from the bones, and is cooked in closed tins. During the cooking the tins have a vent, which is closed when the cooking is done, and the meat comes out of the tins in England in a condition fit for use. But it does not come out in a condition pleasant to the eye,—nor, as regard flavour and nutrition, can it be said to be equal to fresh meat. The prices in England have latterly ranged from 4½*d.* to 6*d.* a pound,—and the pound

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of meat so bought is without bone. There can, I think, be no doubt that these preserved meats, even as they have hitherto reached the English markets, have been of great value to both countries. They have caused a marked rise in the price of sheep, for which, in regard to meat, there was almost no market at all in many parts of the colonies previous to the opening of these establishments; and they have added, at any rate, something to the very limited diet of the poorer classes at home. All the meat which could be exported from Australia, even were it as easy to export meat as flour, would not, at present, go far towards feeding the people of England. But the pastures of Australia are unlimited, and if the trade were fully established, the Australian flocks and herds would be multiplied for the supply of the markets across the water. Australia is not a corn-producing country. Her capabilities, at any rate, do not lie especially in that direction. But she is especially a grazing country. European animals have not only been acclimatized in the colonies with the greatest ease, but have proved themselves to be much more quickly procreative there than in the countries from which they or their ancestors lately came. Horses have bred so freely, that in many places they roam wild through the bush, and are a scourge to the squatters, whose grass they eat, and whose fences they destroy. Oxen also, whose sires and dams have escaped from the herds of the grazier, roam wild and unowned through the distant bush. Sheep are more valuable than horses and oxen, because wool is the staple produce of the country, but sheep have multiplied so quickly, that there are at present in the colonies about twenty-four sheep for every man, woman, and child inhabiting them. In Great Britain and Ireland there is not much above a sheep apiece for each individual. If meat can be brought home in a condition to meet the requirements of the British purchasers, the Australian pastures will go as far towards supplying England with meat as do the prairies of the United States with corn;—and they will do so with the advantage of being a part of the empire which they supply.

The one great fault found with the meats hitherto sent to

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England is that they are over-cooked. Those which I saw and ate before I left England were almost tasteless on account of this fault. They come out, too, from these tins in a guise which creates a prejudice against them, which I have found to be very strong in the minds of poor people. I have heard them say that, if they can't have English meat, they will do without Australian meat. Servants are averse to it, thinking that they are ill-used if asked to eat it. I have found the managers of meat-preserving companies in the colonies quite aware of this, and have thought that they were disposed rather to think that these prejudices should be made to sink before the undoubted superiority of over-cooked meat to no meat at all, than to express a hope that they could remedy the evil by sending the meat to England at the same time secure and with the ordinary juices in it. If the evil be inseparable from the enterprise, of course they are right. The meats, ugly as they are, unappetising, and either dry or greasy, are wholesome, nutritious, and cheap. But if anything better can be done, of course that better will be very welcome.

When I was at Sydney, I was asked to lunch on preserved meats by a gentleman who was managing a Queensland meat-preserving company, of which that distinguished and well-known old colonist, Sir Charles Nicholson, is chairman. My attention was especially called to some roast beef which had been preserved by "Jones' Patent." What may be the specialities of Jones' patent I did not learn, but as to that special joint, I protest that I never ate better cold roast beef in my life. It was not over-cooked, and judging from its colour, appearance, and flavour, it might have been cooked and put into the larder on the previous day. Whether it can be made to travel to England, in the same condition, I cannot say. Our host assured me that it would do so,—but he told us at the same time that it could not be sold for less than 8*d.* a pound. Let the meat be as good as it may, any meat that finds its way ready cooked to England will encounter a certain amount of prejudice, and I fear that the price of 8*d.* a pound will be too high to stand against this dislike.

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But the enterprise which promises most in regard to the exportation of meats from Australia is that at which Mr. Thomas Mort of Sydney has been at work now for many years. No man is better known in New South Wales,—perhaps no one is so highly regarded,—for commercial enterprise, joined to science and ingenuity, as the gentleman I have named. In Sydney Mr. Mort is as well known as are the most familiar objects of the streets, and all who know New South Wales well are ready to declare that no inhabitant of the colony deserves better from her than Mr. Mort. He has set on foot a scheme for sending meat home in ice,—or, to speak more correctly, a scheme for sending meat home in a chamber the temperature of which shall be always kept below the freezing point by the use of ice. As the quantity to be sent home must be very great, in order that the meat may be sold cheap, and still at a remunerative price, the ice for the purpose cannot be carried with the meat, but must be daily fabricated on the journey by chemical appliances. The difficulty is not in regard to the meat, but in regard to the ice. That ice can be made in any quantity by a process which I will not attempt to describe, but in which ammonia is the principal ingredient, admits of no doubt; but unless it can be made at a low expense, the speculation will not be remunerative. For years Mr. Mort has been working at this matter, and has spent very large sums of money on the work. We know that the first attempt made at sending frozen Australian meat to England,—in 1873,—was unsuccessful. But great commercial feats are always heralded by failures.

Should this be done, the meat will reach England, not cooked, nor cut into junks,—but in the shape of joints, as we at home are accustomed to buy them in the butchers' shops. I ate at Mr. Mort's house a portion of a leg of mutton,—which had been frozen I know not for how long,—as to which it would have been impossible for any one to know that it had been treated otherwise than in the ordinary way. Mr. Mort imagines that meat thus prepared may be sold in England for *6d.* per pound. The meat when received will simply want thawing before it is cooked,—as is

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often necessary with home-grown meat in winter. If this plan can be carried out, there is no reason why all the carcases in Australia, not required for the food of the people there, should not make their way to the English market, and that in a form which will not render them unfit even for the most fastidious.

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CHAPTER VIII.

METALS.

I WAS in New South Wales in October, November, and December, 1871, and again in June and July, 1872. During my former visit very little was said in Sydney about gold or other metals. The tone of the public mind on the subject of mining was very different from that prevailing in Melbourne and Victoria generally. Indeed there seemed to be a feeling, in which I sympathized, that though gold-fields when found should of course be worked, the finding and working them could hardly be regarded as an unmixed good to a community. Such operations led to gambling, disturbed the ways of legitimate commerce, excited men's minds unduly, and were dangerous. Victoria was very keen about gold, believed in gold, was willing to trust to gold for her greatness and population. Victoria prided herself on being a gold colony. Let it be so. New South Wales was conscious of a pride in better things. That perhaps may be taken as an expression of the general mind as I read it. When I returned after an interval of six months all this was changed. No one in Sydney would talk about anything but mining shares. It was not only gold, nor, as I think, chiefly gold, that was in men's mouths. Copper had been found in the west,—in the district between Bathurst and Orange,—and tin in the north,—in New England. It seemed that all they who had been so sober before were now as mad after mining shares as the gentlemen who congregate under the verandah in Melbourne. Everybody had shares in copper, and almost everybody shares in tin. Gentlemen went about

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with specimens in their pockets, and seemed to think that any conversation diverging from the one important subject was frivolous and unneeded. "You find us a little changed; don't you?" one old friend of the last year said to me. When I acknowledged that I had recognised an altered tone, he assured me that Sydney had now shaken herself and had ceased to be dull. Copper and tin were at the moment in the ascendant; but gold, too, was very "lively." The glories of Hill End, and of Hawkin's Hill in the Tambaroora district, had culminated since I had before been in the colony, and Tambaroora itself had come to be talked about as perhaps the future greatest gold-field of Australia. I was asked whether "I had visited Tambaroora"? I replied that I had not, and now could not do so. Then I was told that I had then missed the one place in all that eastern world which more than any other would make Australia wealthy, happy, and great.

Though I did not visit Tambaroora or Hill End, I did go to other gold-fields in the colony. Gold, as I have said, was very "quiet" when I was first in New South Wales;—but it is not therefore to be inferred that there were no gold-seekers in the colony, or that the business was not being carried on with individual enterprise at this or that happy, or less happy, "rush." The quiescence described was that of the colony at large, as evinced by the feeling in the metropolis,—as was also subsequently the reverse of quiescence. Since the days of Hargreaves, the reputed discoverer of gold in New South Wales, there has never been a time when the search for gold has been abandoned in New South Wales, or in which large quantities have not been extracted from the earth. Whether the gold-seekers have or have not prospered as a body, it is impossible for any one now to say with accuracy. A statement sufficiently true of the value which has been got from the soil can no doubt be made. Such statements are published from year to year with all the correctness usual to statistical records. We know that in 1862 New South Wales produced gold to the value of £2,212,534, which amount in 1870 had gradually fallen down to £763,655. But we do not know, and never can know, all the money

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expended, and the value of the time expended, not only in extracting the gold when the site of it was found, but in seeking for the sites in which it might perchance be hidden. The search has ever been going on, and there has usually been some new "rush" to which miners could hurry themselves with renewed energy and hopes still green.

To the stranger personally uninterested in the search, it seems that the known presence of gold beneath the earth begets a fury in the minds of men compelling them to search for it, let the risk, the danger, the misery, the probable losses, be what they may. That a thing in itself so rich, so capable of immediately producing all that men most desire, should lie buried in the dirt beneath their feet, loose among the worthless pebbles of the rivers, mixed at haphazard with the deep clumsy lumbering rocks, overcomes the imagination of the unconscious thinker, and takes possession of his heart and brain. For a while he makes no estimate as to the cost of his labours as contrasted wirh the value of his chance of success. It is gold that is there,—gold that is customarily treasured, gold that is kept within bars and dealt out in tiny morsels as the recognised reward of the sweat of many hours, gold that is thought about, talked about, dreamed about, gold that is longed for, worked for, gambled for, and sinned for; and this gold may be got by the handful, if only the lucky sod of earth be turned. There is a feeling almost impersonal in the would-be miner's breast, as he feels it to be a shame that the dirty earth should hold, and hold without in any way using, the treasure of all treasures that is sweetest to the heart of man. "Cogere humanos in usus," should certainly be the motto of the gold-seeker.

When I was leaving Sydney in October, 1871, with the intention of travelling westward into the colony, the rush to Gullgong was the rush of the day, and to Gullgong I went in company with the gold commissioners of the district. I have already given some description of Gympie, in Queensland, but Gympie when I was there was an old-established place, and the rush thither was a thing quite of the past. The rush to Gullgong was recent. The great attraction proposed to one visiting a rush seemed to consist in the

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sight of a congregating together of a great many men, without any of the ordinary comforts of life, and with but few of those appliances which are generally regarded as necessaries. I was told there were 12,000 people at Gullgong, all of whom had collected themselves thither within a few months. The place had begun to be a place about a month since,—but the real rush had only lately commenced. I confess that I felt an interest in seeing a town without streets, and people collected together with houses made of canvas and rough boards,—an interest akin to that which induces others to see a criminal hung. Our journey thither was one of three days from Bathurst, and was performed in the commissioner's buggy. As we went we saw parties of men, generally ten or twelve in number, either leisurely tramping along the road with their swags on their back, or taking their mid-day siesta under the gum-trees. The man who travels on foot in Australia, whether he be miner, shepherd, shearer, or simply beggar, always carries his "swag" with him,—which consists of his personal properties rolled up in a blanket. The blanket is an essential necessity, because the man sleeps out in the bush beside a fire. And he carries also a pannikin and a "billy." The latter is an open pot in which he boils his water and makes his tea,—for the bushman will always have a bag of tea within his swag. The billy is as essential as the blankets. A bushman of any refinement has the pannikin for drinking; but the rough old chum will dispense with it as a useless luxury, and will drink his tea out of his billy.

And these men were making a rush! They seemed to me to rush very leisurely. I hardly know what I had expected,—whether to see each miner galloping on his steed, or running continually towards his gold-field at the rate of eight miles an hour. Though the influx of men to such a place as Gullgong is a "rush," and when very numerous may be described as a stampede, the men themselves are orderly and slow. They have probably done it before, and know, if not the tale of the hare and the tortoise, at any rate the moral of the tale. But the men I saw were journeying some one way and some the other. Backs were turned upon

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Gullgong as well as faces towards it. Then I learned that such was the case with almost all rushes. Men would try their luck for a month, or perhaps for a fortnight, and if they failed, or did not meet success to satisfy them, would pack up their swags and would betake themselves elsewhere. In this way the population at a rush is very precarious, falling as quickly as it rises, receiving or losing a thousand in a few days, as the place gives or refuses to give its treasures. And, as a matter of course, the trade by which the place is supplied with meat and bread, with tea, sugar and sweet-meats,—the articles of food on which miners chiefly live,—must be equally precarious.

On our route we passed the little town of Sofala, which was in point of time the second established gold-field in New South Wales, Ophir having been the first. Sofala is now a poor little town, containing 644 inhabitants, of whom a considerable portion are Chinese. It is built on a river, the channel of which contained the gold which created the town. The hills rise abruptly on each side of the stream, and give to the place a quaint picturesque appearance,—as though it were altogether out of the world. Here we found about a dozen Chinamen "fossicking" after gold amidst the dirt of the river, which had already been washed by the first gold-seekers. These men "washed up" while we were looking on, and we saw them reduce the dirt collected during the day to a few dim specks of the precious metal. They then told us that they estimated their earnings for that day at 1*s*. each. They seemed to think that this was bad, but were not at all demonstrative in their disappointment.

Two days' travelling from Sofala took us to Gullgong; we stayed a night on the way at Mudgee, a clean little town, celebrated for the special breed of sheep produced in its neighbourhood. At Mudgee I was taken to visit the Mechanics' Institute, at which place I found a great number of well-thumbed novels. There were other books certainly; but the Mudgee shepherds certainly prefer novels. All these small towns have public libraries by one name or another. Mudgee boasts no more than 1,786 inhabitants,

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but seemed to be very much better off in the way of churches, hotels, institutes, and schools than towns of more than double the size in England.

Gullgong was certainly a rough place when I visited it, but not quite so rough as I had expected. There was an hotel there, at which I got a bedroom to myself, though but a small one, and made only of slabs. But a gorgeously grand edifice was being built over our heads at the time, the old inn being still kept on while the new inn was being built on the same site. The inhabited part of the town consisted of two streets at right angles to each other, in each of which every habitation and shop had probably required but a few days for its erection. The fronts of the shops were covered with large advertisements,—the names and praises of the traders,—as is customary now with all new-fangled marts; but the place looked more like a fair than a town,—perhaps like one of those fairs which used to be temporary towns and to be continued for weeks,—such as some of us have seen at Amsterdam and at Leipsic. But with this difference,—that in the cities named the old houses are seen at the back of the new booths, whereas at a gold-rush there is nothing behind. Everything needful, however, seemed to be at hand. There were bakers, butchers, grocers, and dealers in soft goods. There were public-houses and banks in abundance. There was an auctioneer's establishment, at which I attended the sale of horses and carts. There was a photographer, and there was a theatre, at which I saw the "Colleen Bawn" acted with a great deal of spirit, and a considerable amount of histrionic talent. After the theatre a munificent banker of the town gave us an oyster supper, at a supper-room. It may be inferred, therefore, that the comforts of life have not been altogether neglected at Gullgong. In the middle of the day there had been a public dinner or lunch, at which there was much speaking. I cannot say that the Gullgong oratory was as good as the Gullgong acting or the Gullgong oysters.

I think that the town of Gullgong, including its general inhabitants and mode of life, was more interesting to me even than the mines. I was charmed to hear that a few nights before there had been a most successful public ball.

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But I was distressed to find that there had been some heart-burning. Where was the line to be drawn in reference to the ladies? The postmistress would not attend the ball unless barmaids were excluded. The barmaids,—I think very properly,—were admitted, and the postmistress, who enjoyed the reputation of being the beauty of Gullgong, remained at home.

Of course, having come to Gullgong, I had to see the mines. I went down the shaft of one, 150 feet deep, with my foot in the noose of a rope. Having offered to descend, I did not like to go back from my word when the moment came; but as the light of the day faded from my descending eyes, and as I remembered that I was being lowered by the operations of a horse who might take it into his brutish head to lower me at any rate he pleased,—or not to lower me at all, but to keep me suspended in that dark abyss,—I own that my heart gave way, and that I wished I had been less courageous. But I went down, and I came up again;—and I found six or seven men working at the bottom of the hole. I afterwards saw the alluvial dirt brought up from some other hole, puddled and washed, and the gold extracted. When extracted it was carried away in a tin pannikin,—which I thought detracted much from the splendour of the result.

Of the men around me some were miners working for wages, and some were shareholders, each probably with a large stake in the concern. I could not in the least tell which was which. They were all dressed alike, and there was nothing of the master and the man in the tone of their conversation. Among those present at the washing up, there were two Italians, an American, a German, and a Scotchman, who I learned were partners in the property. The important task of conducting the last wash, of throwing away for ever the stones and dirt from which the gold had sunk, was on this occasion confided to the hands of the American. The gold was carried away in a pannikin by the German. Why should he not have put in his fingers and appropriated an ounce of the fragments to his own use? I know it is mean to suspect; but among us in England checks are necessary. No doubt the German to whom the

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pannikin was confided was respected far and wide for his honesty. Of the courtesy of all these men it is impossible to speak too highly, or of the civility of the miners generally; and in saying this I do not allude to the demeanour of the men to myself or to other chance visitors, but to their ordinary mode of conducting themselves. The Australian miner when he is in work never drinks,—and seems to feel a pride in his courtesy. It must be understood that his is not a submissive deportment, prone to the touching of hats and a silent reverence of his betters,—but a manly bearing, which enables him to express himself freely, but which never verges on distasteful familiarity.

I found that miners working for wages at Gullgong were earning from £2 10*s.* to £3 a week;—but I found also that many were there who could not get such work to do. No doubt a glut of labour would soon tend to lower the wages,—but the population did not seem to be fixed enough to have produced that result. Men came, and tried their fortune on little speculations of their own, and failed. Then, if they could not at once get wages to their mind, they took up their swags and departed to some other rush. I found also that many men were employed on the most singular and easiest task that I ever met in my travels. When a mining speculator had taken out his claim to a piece of land, the law required him to occupy it. If he did not at once work it, he must hold it by his own bodily presence or by that of some deputy for at least two hours a day. I think I was told that this minimum of occupation for two hours must be before noon, either from nine to eleven or from ten to twelve. This duty was called "shepherding,"—and the wages of a man to shepherd a claim were 25*s.* a week. But these mining shepherds are not miners. I asked a miner whether it would not suit him to earn 25*s.* a week by shepherding, and then to take a day's work, or a part of a day's work, at his own enterprise. But he gave me to understand that shepherding a claim was dishonourable for a miner.

It seemed to me, when I was at Gullgong, that the rush was not regarded as a success. The population was decreasing; and though much gold had been extracted, much

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useless labour had been expended on "duffers." A shaft sunk without any produce from it is a duffer. Looking around, an inexperienced stranger would think that gold about Gullgong was ubiquitous. There were holes everywhere, and the ugly masses of upturned clay which always mark the gold-seeker's presence. But of these excavations the majority were duffers. It is the duffering part of the business which makes it all so sad. So much work is done from which there is positively no return!

I came away from Gullgong with a feeling that I had hardly seen the rush in its most characteristic phase. The rush had been rushed before I reached it. The place had become to a degree settled,—and people were going out at any rate as fast as they were coming in. But there was another rush to a place about 150 miles from Gullgong,—a place called Currajong, which was described to me as being quite new, and I went there also. It was new, and a more wretched spot I never saw in my life. I was told by one inhabitant that there were over 2,000 people;—by another that there were not above 500. Of the number I could not at all judge myself, either by the concourse of people or of habitations. There were a few public-houses roughly constructed of timber, and a shop or two for the sale of general articles. The miners and their followers were living in tents scattered here and there among the holes they were digging. When gold was "struck" at any of these holes,—when enough had been found to be regarded as a probable forerunner of commercial success,—a red flag was hoisted. Here and there I saw the red flag,—but the holes and adjacent heaps at which there were no red flags were as legion to the distinguished few.

At Gullgong I had found satisfied miners,—men who said that they were doing well; at Currajong everybody seemed to be disappointed, unhappy, and hopeless. The rush, it was found, was going to turn out a "duffer" altogether. The street of the place, if it can be said to have had a street, consisted of a bush road, wider and more trodden than usual, with the trees standing close around, though the undergrowth and shrubs have been burned or other-

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wise used, and the trees themselves mutilated. Everywhere through the bush there were little tents, and holes and heaps. I visited one spot at which three men were working, one below filling a bucket, and two above drawing the bucket up. This they had been doing for a fortnight, and had found nothing. They did it for three weeks longer, and still finding no gold, had then gone away. One of them was the son of an English gentleman, who had thought that Australian gold-mining might probably be a road to easy wealth. He got his experience at Currajong, but he got nothing else. I can fancy no more heart-breaking occupation than the work of trundling up dirt out of a hole eight hours a day without results. There were drunken people about Currajong,—which I had not seen elsewhere,—and a rowdy aspect which made me think ill of the prospects of the place. I was told subsequently that for a while it was not a success, and that many left it in disgust; but that afterwards gold-bearing quartz was found in large quantities, and that they who stuck to the place through its early misfortunes did well there. Currajong, when I saw it, seemed to be the most hopelessly disappointing place I had visited in the colonies.

New South Wales contains coal as well as gold, and has coal-mines which are worked successfully. In this respect she is blessed above any other of these colonies. Coal is heard of and talked about in, I think, every province of Australia,—and specimens are shown in proof of its existence; but coal is worked successfully in New South Wales, and as yet in New South Wales only. Newcastle, as the head-quarters of Australian coal is properly called, has become the second city of the colony. Coal is the mineral product of New South Wales next in value to gold, but is so at a very great distance. The value of the gold raised in 1862 and 1870 was for the former year £2,212,534, and for the latter £763,655. That of the coal produced in the same years was, in 1862, £476,522, and for 1870 £316,385. As regards both there had been a falling off in value,—that of the gold being by about two-thirds. That in the coal is small, and does not at all indicate the amount produced,

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but only the price of the article. In 1862 thirty-three coal-mines in New South Wales produced 342,067 tons of coals,—and in 1870 thirty-two mines produced 868,564 tons. It seems that the increase in produce has gone on almost steadily, whereas the price has fluctuated considerably. In 1862 the coals at the pit's mouth were worth very nearly 13*s.* a ton, whereas in 1870 they were not worth 8*s.* At the end of 1871, when I visited Newcastle, they were still somewhat lower. The shareholders of coal-mines doubtless regard this falling off in price as a great calamity, but the consumers of coal in Sydney and Melbourne and the owners of steam-ships plying to and from the colonies probably regard the matter in a different light.

In England we are accustomed to think that the possession of coal is the greatest blessing which Providence has bestowed upon us, and to believe that we owe to it our wealth, our population, and our greatness. I doubt whether there is a man of business in Great Britain who would wish to exchange our coal-mines for gold-fields. When the idea is presented to our minds we at once feel that the really productive powers of coal must be much more fertile in producing actual wealth than any amount of a metal, the value of which is in truth little more than nominal. No increase in the production of coal would at all diminish the real value of the article; but were the production to be increased suddenly, violently, and to a great extent, the value of the metal would fall away in a quickly increasing ratio in accordance with the increase of production. Its value depends on its comparative rarity;—and, therefore, when we are told of some probable future development of Australian gold-fields at a hitherto unprecedented rate; when we are assured that Australian gold is as yet in its infancy,—as I have been assured very often;—we feel that even should it be so, the expected wealth will not follow the new discoveries. Should it come very quickly, the dislocation of prices, which is now being effected slowly by the gradual increase in the amount, and therefore gradual decline in the value of gold, would become rapid, and therefore ruinous to many. In such a

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case the wealth of the world would be increased only as far as gold is required,—not as wealth,—but as a symbol of wealth. Whereas every additional ton of coal that we get will contain as much power as every ton of coal that was got before it. Therefore, although the coal of Newcastle and Wollongong, in the present price paid for it, falls very far behind the gold of New South Wales, I regard coal as being the more important produce of the two. Had there been no coal found in New South Wales almost every source of wealth in Australia would have been stunted. Steamers could not have plied, nor railways have been worked, unless at prices which would have made them inaccessible to the community. All machinery for mines and other works must have been procured from Europe. The copper must have been sent home unsmelted, and therefore at treble the freight now paid for it. It is useless to expatiate on this,—as who is there that does not know that a country without coal is poor and miserable, and that a country with coal ought to be rich and blessed?

The most extensive coal region of Australia is that in the valley of the Hunter River, which empties itself into the sea at Newcastle, about 75 miles north of Sydney. The collieries are found for many miles up the river,—indeed along its whole length up to the base of the mountain ranges,—and are worked within three or four miles of Newcastle. They rejoice in the old well-known North of England colliers' names,—such as Wallsend, Lampton, Hexham, Alnwick, and the like. I should probably be thought guilty of exaggeration if I were to say that they are inexhaustible. After the disputes which have latterly taken place at home as to the growth, production, and consumption of coal, a plain man hardly dares to have an opinion on the matter. But there is a world of coal around Newcastle,—which looks as though it would suffice for the wants of the South-eastern people to the end of time.'

About 40 miles south of Sydney there is another coal-field, in the Illawarra district, for which Wollongong is the seaport. I did not visit Wollongong, but I learned that that there were five different mines worked there, from which

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about 90,000 tons of coal were extracted in 1870. To the west of Sydney, there have also lately been opened coal-mines at Hartley,—which are as yet young, but which in 1870 produced 2,600 tons of coal. The Hartley coal is, I believe, used only for the production of gas; but shale is found there, and also at American creek, near Wollongong, from which kerosene is made. It is boasted on behalf of the shale oil of New South Wales that it is better than the American,—the advantage in favour of the Australian oil being that it will not ignite at a temperature ten degrees higher than that at which the purest American oil breaks into fire. I give this statement merely as I got it from the pages of the Report of the International Exhibition at Sydney, to which I have before referred,—and not as the result of any experiments made by myself into the qualities of kerosene.

I have said above that when I returned to Sydney I found all my formerly quiet-going friends in that city very much disturbed, and many of them considerably elated in regard to copper and tin. I can say nothing, from my own observation, on the resources of the colony as far as these metals were concerned. Copper-mines had previously been worked in the Orange district, and also near Lake George in the Goulbourn district, but not to such an extent as to have become a source of great public interest. Iron also has been found and worked at Nattai, in the south, but never as yet with any profit to the proprietors. That there is iron in New South Wales is a matter beyond doubt. Silver also has been found at Bronlee and Murrurundi, and cinnabar at Rylstone. There were also diamond-mines on the Cudgegong River, near to Rylstone, which some time since were worked by an Australian Diamond Mining Company; but the expenses exceeded the returns, and the work has been abandoned.

It was believed of Australia, when Great Britain first planted her colonies there, that she would prove to be a country almost blank and barren in regard to minerals. It seems, however, now, that few countries on the earth are

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richer in ores than she is. If iron can be found on her hills, and worked, she will probably become as populous and as rich as the United States.

In the meantime the lately awakened but now energetic speculators of New South Wales are all making fortunes out of tin and copper.

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CHAPTER IX.

COUNTRY LIFE IN THE BUSH.

WHEN in New South Wales I spent a month at a small squatter's station in the distant bush, and as the difference between bush life in Australia and country life in England is more marked than I think any other difference between the two countries, I propose to describe the thing as I found it. I had already stayed at various sheep-stations in Queensland, but only for a few days at each; and these had been generally large places, where perhaps from one to two hundred thousand sheep were shorn,—and into which consequently the comforts and luxuries of civilised life had been imported. These were hardly typical bush residences. At that to which I now went, a young squatter beginning life owned not much more than ten thousand sheep, and was living quite "in the rough." The number of sheep at these stations will generally indicate with fair accuracy the mode of life at the head station. A hundred thousand sheep and upwards require a professed man-cook and a butler to look after them; forty thousand sheep cannot be shorn without a piano; twenty thousand is the lowest number that renders napkins at dinner imperative. Ten thousand require absolute plenty, meat in plenty, tea in plenty, brandy and water and colonial wine in plenty, but do not expect champagne, sherry, or made dishes, and are supposed to be content with continued mutton or continued beef,—as the squatter may at the time be in the way of killing sheep or oxen. During this month we killed mutton. After six months I returned to the same station, and beef was the provision of the day.

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Wool had gone up, and sheep had become valuable, and the squatter could not be persuaded to kill a sheep for love or money. He bought cattle as he wanted them, and found that his beef cost him 1½*d.* a pound.

The station I visited, and which I will call M——, was about 250 miles west of Sydney, and was decidedly in the bush. I have already endeavoured to explain that nearly every place beyond the influences of big towns is called "bush,"—even though there should not be a tree to be seen around;—but in reaching this place I journeyed for three days after leaving the railway through continuous woodland, doing about forty miles a day in a buggy. The house stood on a small creek,—hardly to be called a rivulet, because the water does not continually run, and in dry weather lies only in a succession of water-holes,—and was surrounded by interminable forest. Close around it was the home-paddock, railed in, and containing about 50 acres. Such an enclosure about a gentleman's house in England is an appendage of great value, and constitutes with some who are ambitious almost a little park. In the bush it is little more thought of than as so much waste ground round the house. Two or three cows may run in it, or a horse or two for immediate use. It is generally found convenient to have a horse near the house for the sake of "running in" other horses. One horse in the stable to catch two horses in the home-paddock wherewith four horses when wanted may be run in from the horse-paddock, make together a combination which in the bush is considered to be economical and convenient. At M—— the home-paddock was partially cleared of timber, and was pretty enough. Outside it, meeting the creek both before and behind, was the horse-paddock, containing about 250 acres. This was supposed to be the domain appropriated to the horses of the establishment needed for the working of it. At that time there were about twenty, and I believe that there was not one too many. My young friend also had his rams here during a portion of the year, but hardly expected more from so small an enclosure than food for the animals required for use. A public road, such as bush roads are, ran through the horse-paddock,—very in-

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convenient in that it caused the gates to be left open, and brought travellers that way whose presence was hardly desirable, but not without compensation, as a postman with the mails passed each way twice a week. The postman was a great blessing. If he wanted food for himself or his horse, he got it; and in return he complied with all requests made to him, conveying letters, telegrams, and messages with wondrous accuracy. A mailman coming by,—they are mailmen and not postmen in the bush,—is a great addition to the comforts of bush life. At the back of the horse-paddock was the wool-shed paddock, containing about 1,200 acres, with the wool-shed at one corner of it, distant about a mile from the house. For many reasons the wool-shed should not be close. The squatter does not want to have his shearers always in his kitchen, nor to hear their voices close to his verandah. But as it is well for his superintendent to be there constantly during the shearing, and for himself to be there often, any great distance is inconvenient. As my young friend sorted his own wool himself, he was generally in the wool-shed before the shearers, and did not leave it till long after they had "knocked off" work. The wool-shed was a wooden edifice, made of rough timber, roofed with bark, divided into pens, with room for eleven men to shear, and with outside pens for the shorn sheep as they leave the men's hands,—a pen for each shearer. It was constructed to hold about 300 sheep,—and that number would be put into it over-night, so that, even should rain come, there might be so many ready for the shearers in the morning,—for sheep cannot be shorn when wet. The form of the shed was that of the letter L, the base, however, being considerably larger than the upstroke. Along the base the shearers worked. At the corner were the sorting-table, and divided cribs for the different fleeces. In the upper part of the letter the wool was packed, and pressed, and stored, till the drays should come and take it away. My friend acknowledged that he did not think much of his own house, though he had built it himself,—but he was proud of his wool-shed, which was also the creation of his own ingenuity. About a quarter of a mile from the wool-shed was the shearers' hut,

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in which the men slept, and ate, and smoked their pipes. They had their own cook, who on this occasion was a Chinaman,—and, as is always the case with shearers, they gave their cook enough to do. He was generally to be seen outside the door of the hut chopping up onions. The cook had 25*s.* a week and his rations,—the shearers were earning on an average about 7*s.* 6*d.* a day, which was considered bad work. There was rain, and the weather was against the men. The shearers bought their own food from the head station, paying at the rate of 7*s.* 6*d.* a week each for it.

There were three other paddocks on the run,—one containing 12,000 acres, and the others 7,000 acres each. The greater part of the fencing necessary for these domains had been put up by my friend since his occupation at an average cost of £25 a mile. There were over forty miles of fencing on the run, made either with logs laid at length on short round blocks,—called in the bush chock and log,—or of bushes laid lengthways and staked down with forked timber. This fencing suffices for sheep, but would be of no use at all on a run intended for cattle. When a run is not fenced, each flock of sheep requires a shepherd, and the sheep are brought up at night to an enclosure close to the shepherd's hut. When a run is "paddocked," shepherds are not required;—but boundary-riders are employed, each of whom is supplied with two horses, and these men are responsible not only for the sheep but for the fences. They should see every portion of their fences at any rate three times a week, and repair the breaches. A bush fence is easily broken down, but is as easily put up again.

The natural grasses of the bush in the locality of which I am speaking would carry in ordinary weather a sheep to three acres. When the weather was damp and warm it would do much more; when there was either frost or drought, it would not do so much. At M—— there was back ground outside the paddocks as extensive as the fenced area, and it was computed that the run might carry safely about 16,000 sheep.

The house was built at right angles to the creek, to the edge of which the little garden ran. It was of course only

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of one story. A squatter rarely builds a two-storied house till he be a very large squatter indeed, and then his habitation loses most of the characteristics of the bush. It was of one story, and contained but three rooms,—a sitting-room in the middle and a bedroom on each side;—but along the front there ran a verandah twelve feet wide, in which everybody lived,—using the sitting-room simply for meals. Life in the bush would be nothing without a verandah. The men of course spend their days mostly out of doors,—but in the evenings the verandahs are delightful. Here are congregated lounging chairs, generally very rough, but always comfortable,—with tables, sofas, and feminine nicknacks, if there be ladies, till the place has the appearance of a room open to the heavens. A verandah to be perfect should be curtained against the sun, and should be sheltered also from the heat by creepers. Behind the house, about thirty yards distant from it, was the kitchen, with a servants' room attached to it,—and behind that again another edifice called the cottage, consisting of two rooms, in which slept the young men who were about the place;—for it must be remembered that there always are young men about a squatter's station. Then there were other buildings,—forming a quadrangle, which however was never as neat as such homestead quadrangle should be. There was a rough stable, and a rougher coach-house,—and that indispensable accessory the store-room. The place was altogether rough, and certainly not well kept; but it was comfortable and picturesque, and easily susceptible of improvement when increasing flocks and high prices for wool would justify the expenditure.

Almost all these pastoral homesteads are thus made up of various cottages,—till sometimes the place assumes the appearance of a village. When the station is large there will often be a church and a school,—and a separate house for strangers, and a shop for the stores, and an office. At M—— no such grandeur had as yet displayed itself. But there was a garden,—in which the opossums would eat the vegetables,—and an orchard had been commenced.

There was one house at a distance of only three miles,

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which was a great drawback to my friend's happiness,—for it was inhabited by a free-selecter and a publican. I rather liked the publican, as he got up a kangaroo hunt for me,—but the vicinity of grog was looked upon as a serious evil by the squatter. And yet the men never drank when they were at work,—would work for weeks without anything stronger than tea. But if, on an occasion, any one of the station hands did take to drink, he would stay and drink till he was turned out of the house on the plea that he had consumed all his money. This public-house was a blistering thorn in the side of my friend. A gold-field town, whence the letters came, was twelve miles distant; but this was visited as rarely as possible, and was regarded as almost obtrusive in having caused itself to be built in a pastoral district. The nearest neighbours for any social purpose was another squatter, twenty-five miles off.

Of social gatherings, such as we know them, there are none in the bush. Squatters do not go out to dine, or ask each other to dinner. As a rule, I think, they rarely invite each other for country visiting. But they make the freest use of each other's houses,—so that society of a certain kind is created. They do not make visits exclusively of pleasure,—but when business calls them from home they make no scruple of riding up to each other's doors, and demanding hospitality. A bush house is never considered to be full. If there be not rooms apiece for the guests, the men are put together and the women together. If there be not bedsteads, beds are made up on the floors. If room be still lacking, the young men wrap themselves in blankets and stretch themselves in the verandah. It is a point of honour that the house shall never be full,—unless some one very odious comes the way. But even for those who are odious shelter and food are provided in some outside hut or barrack.

I was at M—— during washing and shearing. I speak of course of the washing of sheep. It was the busiest time of the year, and the squatter himself was always out soon after five, and rarely back at the house in time for dinner at eight. He had two assistants, one of whom was his perma-

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nent first lieutenant on the run, and the other was borrowed for the occasion. The three, who were all young, certainly worked much harder than any other men about the place, and seemed to have more on hand than a British prime minister in June. I rode about at my ease,—from the washpool to the wool-shed, and from the wool-shed to the kangaroos,—giving now and then a fantastic opinion as to the doing of the work, criticising the roughness of the mode in which the poor brutes were hauled into the water, or the cruelty with which they were wounded by the shearers. But my friends were terribly in earnest. Now and again a man would misbehave, and squatters' law had to be exercised with prompt decision. If a man would not work, or worked amiss, he was sent away with very curt warning,—for the deed of agreement which is always drawn up, gives the squatter the power of judging as to the man's deficiency, and of punishing him for being deficient. The sheep were always being washed, and always being shorn,—but if the rain should come between the two operations all would be spoilt. Rain did come,—but not thorough rain, and all was not spoilt. And then the "yarding" of sheep by hundreds at a time,—getting them through one set of pens before washing, and through another set before shearing,—having them ready for the morning's work, and finished off before the dark night came,—weighing out tea and sugar and flour for the men, killing and preparing meat for them, sorting and packing the wool, pressing and labelling the bales,—all seemed to demand more than Herculean energy. At large stations all this is done easily, because the greater number admit of divided labour. It seemed to me that the care of ten thousand sheep was the most difficult task that a man could have imposed upon him.

Those rides through the forest, either when I was alone or when I could get my host to go with me,—which was rarely, unless on a Sunday afternoon,—were very pleasant. The melancholy note of the magpie was almost the only sound that was heard. Occasionally kangaroos would be seen,—two or three staring about them after a half-tame fashion, as though they had not as yet made up their mind

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whether it would be necessary for them to run. When approached they would move,—always in a line, and with apparent leisure till pursued. Then they would bound away, one here and one there, at a pace which made it impossible for a single horseman to get near them in a thickly timbered country. It was all wood. There arose at last a feeling that go where one might through the forest, one was never going anywhere. It was all picturesque,—for there was rocky ground here and there, and hills in the distance, and the trees were not too close for the making of pretty vistas through them;—but it was all the same. One might ride on, to the right or to the left, or might turn back, and there was ever the same view. And there were no objects to reach, unless it was the paddock fence. And when the paddock fence was jumped, then it was the same thing again. Looking around, one could tell by no outward sign whether one was inside or outside the boundary,—whether one was two miles or ten miles from the station.

Perhaps the most astonishing phenomenon on these runs is the apparent paucity of sheep. As a fact, there are thousands all around;—but unless looked for they are never seen; and even when looked for by inexperienced eyes are often missed. If the reader will bear in mind that an enclosure of 12,000 acres contains more than eighteen square miles, he will understand how unlike to anything in England must be even the enclosed country in Australia. One seems to ride for ever and to come to nothing, and to relinquish at last the very idea of an object. Nevertheless, it was very pleasant. Of all places that I was ever in this place seemed to be the fittest for contemplation. There was no record of the hours but by the light. When it was night work would be over. The men would cease as the sun was setting,—but the masters would continue till the darkness had come upon them.

There were four or five meals in the day. There was an early breakfast in the cottage for the young men,—there was another breakfast at nine for those who were idle,—for the ladies who were there and for myself. There was lunch at about two, to which one or two from the wood-shed

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might or might not rush in as things were going with them, —and there was dinner at about eight o'clock. My wife had brought a cook with her from England who was invaluable,—or would have been had she not found a husband for herself when she had been about a month in the bush. But in spite of her love, and her engagement to a man who was considerably above her in position, she was true to us while she remained at M——, and did her best to make us all comfortable. She was a good-looking, strong woman, of excellent temper, who could do anything she put her hand to, from hairdressing and confectionery up to making butter and brewing beer. I saw her six months afterwards, —"quite the lady," but ready for any kind of work that might come in her way. When I think of her, I feel that no woman of that kind ought, as regards herself, to stay in England if she can take herself or get herself taken to the colonies. I mention our cook, because her assistance certainly tended very greatly to our increased comfort. The viands provided were mutton, bread, vegetables, and tea. Potatoes were purchased as an ordinary part of the station stores, and the opossums had left us lettuce, tomatoes, and a few cabbages. Dinner was always dignified with soup and salad,—which must not, however, be regarded as being within the ordinary bush dietary. In other respects the meals were all alike. There was mutton in every shape, and there was always tea. Tea at a squatter's table,—at the table of a squatter who has not yet advanced himself to a man-cook or butler, and a two-storied house,—is absolutely indispensable. At this squatter's table there was colonial wine and there was brandy,—produced chiefly to supply my wants; but there was always tea. The young men when they came in, hot and fagged with their day's work, would take a glass of brandy and water standing, as a working man with us takes his glass of beer at a bar. But when they sat down with their dinners before them, the tea-cup did for them what the wine-glass does for us. The practice is so invariable that any shepherd whose hut you may visit will show his courtesy by asking you to take a pannikin of tea. In supplying stores to men, tea and sugar,

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flour and meat, are the four things which are included as matters of course. The tea is always bought by the chest, and was sold by the merchant at the rate of 1*s.* 6*d.* a pound. There was but one class of tea at the station, which I found to be preferable to very much that I am called upon to drink in England.

The recreations of the evening consisted chiefly of tobacco in the verandah. I did endeavour to institute a whist table, but I found that my friends, who were wonderfully good in regard to the age and points of a sheep, and who could tell to the fraction of a penny what the wool of each was worth by the pound, never could be got to remember the highest card of the suit. I should not have minded that had they not so manifestly despised me for regarding such knowledge as important. They were right, no doubt, as the points of a sheep are of more importance than the pips of a card, and the human mind will hardly admit of the two together. Whist is a jealous mistress;—and so is a sheep-station.

I have been at very many bush houses,—at over thirty different stations in the different colonies,—but at not one, as I think, in which I have not found a fair provision of books. It is universally recognised among squatters that a man who settles down in the bush without books is preparing for himself a miserable future life. That the books are always used when they are there I will not say. That they are used less frequently than they should be used I do not doubt. When men come in from physical work, hungry, tired,—with the feeling that they have earned an hour or two of ease by many hours of labour,—they are apt to claim the right to allow their minds to rest as well as their limbs. Who does not know how very much this is the case at home, even among young men and women in our towns, who cannot plead the same excuse of real bodily fatigue? That it should be so is a pity of pities,—not on the score chiefly of information lost or of ignorance perpetuated; but because the power of doing that which should be the one recreation and great solace of our declining years perishes from desuetude, and cannot be renewed when age has come upon us. But I think that this folly is hardly more general in

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the Australian bush than in English cities. There are books to be read,—and the young squatter, when the evening comes upon him, has no other recreation to entice him. He has no club, no billiard table, no public-house which he can frequent. Balls and festivities are very rare. He probably marries early, and lives the life of a young patriarch, lord of everything around him, and master of every man he meets on his day's ride. Of course there are many who have risen to this from lower things,—who have become squatters without any early education, who have been butchers, drovers, or perhaps shepherds themselves. That they should not be acquainted with books is a matter of course. They have lacked the practice in youth of which I have just spoken. But among those who have had the advantage of early nurture, and have been taught to handle books familiarly when young, I think that reading is at least as customary as it is with young men in London. The authors I found most popular were certainly Shakespeare, Dickens, and Macaulay. I would back the chance of finding Macaulay's Essays at a station against that of any book in the language except Shakespeare. To have a Shakespeare is a point of honour with every man who owns a book at all,—whether he reads it or leaves it unread.

I have said that squatters marry early. The reasons for doing so are very strong; and those reasons for not doing so, which are terribly familiar to us at home, hardly exist in the bush. The man is alone, and can have at any rate no female companionship unless he marry. In ordinary life, as we know it, the unmarried man enjoys as many comforts,—unfortunately, perhaps, more luxuries,—than do they who take to themselves wives. But in the bush the unmarried man is very desolate, and will probably soon become forlorn and wretched in his mode of life. He will hardly get a woman who will cook for him decently, or will sew a button on his shirt when it is wanted. And he will soon care nothing how his dinner is cooked, and whether his shirt be with or without a button. On the other hand, the cost of his household when he is married will hardly be more than when he is single. If his wife know how to keep

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a bush house, her presence will almost be a saving to him. At home, in England, the young man when he marries has to migrate from his lodgings to a house; he must make up an establishment, buy furniture, hire servants, and enter altogether upon a new phase of life. He must have ready money in his pocket to begin with, and a future income probably very much in advance of that he has hitherto been expected to expend. But on a station there is nothing of the kind. There is the house, in which it may be necessary to put a few additional comforts. There is the establishment,—already on so large a scale in consequence of the necessity of supplying men with rations that no recognised increase is created. When children come, and education is needed, expenses of course will grow; but at first the thing is so easy that the young squatter simply goes out in his buggy and brings home the daughter of some other squatter,—after a little ceremony performed in the nearest church.

As a consequence of this, life in the bush is decent and moral. The bulk of the labour is performed by a nomad tribe, who wander in quest of their work, and are hired only for a time. This is of course the case in regard to washing sheep and shearing them. It is equally so when fences are to be made, or ground to be cleared, or trees to be "rung." The ringing of trees consists of cutting the bark through all round, so that the tree cease to suck up the strength of the earth for its nutrition, and shall die. For all these operations temporary work is of course required, and the squatter seldom knows whether the men he employs be married or single. They come and go, and are known by queer nicknames or are known by no names at all. They probably have their wives elsewhere, and return to them for a season. They are rough to look at, dirty in appearance, shaggy, with long hair, men who, when they are in the bush, live in huts, and hardly know what a bed is. But they work hard, and are both honest and civil. Theft among them is almost unknown. Men are constantly hired without any character but that which they give themselves; and the squatters find from experience that the men are able to do that which they

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declare themselves capable of performing. There will be exceptions, but such is the rule. Their one great fault is drunkenness,—and yet they are sober to a marvel. As I have said before, they will work for months without touching spirits,—but their very abstinence creates a craving desire which, when it is satisfied, will satisfy itself with nothing short of brutal excess. Among the masters of these men,—among squatters with their superintendents and overseers,—drinking is not a common fault. I have seen a squatter drunk. I have seen a squatter very drunk. But he was a jovial exception.

Squatters, I think, do not as a rule go very frequently to church. Churches are not near to them, and as they are always either driving in buggies or riding on horseback in pursuance of their ordinary occupations, on Sundays they are not ready to add perhaps thirty miles, perhaps forty, to their week's work in quest of a sermon. I have spoken of stations which possessed churches of their own. When that is the case, the squatter is generally the parson for three Sundays,—being relieved by a real, but itinerant, clergyman on the fourth. I am, however, bound to acknowledge that Sabbath-day observances are laxly kept in the bush.

The resident squatter is generally a young man,—one at least not past the prime of life. For this state of things there are sundry causes. The squatter who succeeds in life, as he grows old does not cease to be a squatter. He sticks to his wool as closely as the lawyer does to his wig, or the banker to his ledger. He knows well every shilling that is spent and made. But he becomes an absentee squatter,—having a son, or a junior partner, or perhaps a manager, to manage the run and to send him the accounts. The money comes into his hand readily, as the produce of a sheep-station is never sold on the spot. London is almost always the rich squatter's market. Then again the work to be done is hardly fitted for an old man. All that an old man can do, he can do away from the station. He has become tired of buggies and bucking horses, perhaps tired of tea and mutton; and he makes himself comfortable in a town.

And many no doubt are ruined before they grow to be

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old;—for, to tell the truth of it, the growing of wool is at the best a precarious trade. Thousands have made their fortunes at it,—but thousands also with small capitals have gone to the wall in their struggles, and have been no more heard of among the stations. What becomes of them I cannot say. Who knows the fate of the ruined man? The business is always on a large scale,—and being large and also precarious cannot but be dangerous. With wool ranging from 1*s.* to 2*s.* a pound, a squatter with 20,000 sheep, and a small capital, may be made by high prices, or marred by low prices, in one year. The year of favourable circumstances in regard to weather and climate may put him at his ease for life,—and a year's drought may beggar him. This also tends to weed out the old men, and leave the young men in possession. At fifty the squatter can afford either to live in town or in England,—or else he can no longer afford to live on his station.

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CHAPTER X.

THE RIVERINA.

As in the old European countries so in the colonies, different districts have acquired different names, which have much significance in men's minds and are understood with sufficient clearness, though they have no recognised municipal or political standing. In New South Wales a northern part of the colony is called New England; a district lying on the seaboard south of Sydney is called Illawarra; and to the west, in the midst of the great rivers of the continent, is the Riverina, or Mesopotamia of New South Wales. The Riverina has characteristics of its own so marked and so important that they demand recognition from any one who desires to understand the position of the Australian colonies generally. It is bounded throughout on the south by the river Murray,—having in that direction a certain limit, as the Murray is the northern frontier of Victoria. But it has no other certain boundary,—unless it be the one hundred and forty-first line of east longitude on its western frontier, which line is the proclaimed division of South Australia and New South Wales. To the north it runs away into undefined space. To the east there is no recognised limitation by which it is divided from the remainder of the colony. The one hundred and forty-eighth line of longitude may perhaps be taken as the best demarcation that can be expressed; though this would be by no means correct throughout, as the squatters on the Boyne and the Macquarie rivers to the north, who are to the west of that line, certainly do not consider themselves as belonging to the

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Riverina. But in fact the Riverina consists of that part of the colony of New South Wales which finds that Melbourne or Adelaide are markets easier of approach than Sydney, the capital of their own colony. The geographical facts which have brought about this result, give to the people of the Riverina their distinctive interests, and force upon them a feeling opposed in politics to that which is general through the more thickly populated eastern half of the colony.

The Riverina, in area, comprises perhaps a full moiety of New South Wales, though in population it contains but little more than a twentieth part of the whole. The population of the colony in round numbers is half a million; that of the Riverina about 28,000. As the limits of the district cannot be defined with certainty, neither, of course, can the population be stated with accuracy. It lies, as the name implies, among the rivers,—among the only well-known great rivers of the continent. These rivers, with many tributaries, are the Murray, the Murrumbidgee running into the Murray, the Lachlan running into the Murrumbidgee, and the Darling running into the Murray below the Murrumbidgee. The Murray, carrying down the waters of an immense portion of the great Australian plains, finds its way into the sea at last by so poor an aperture as to forbid internal navigation on a scale greater than that which in other countries is achieved by canals. And the navigation afforded by these natural waters is only spasmodic. During a portion of the year it is interrupted by drought. At uncertain seasons in some years it is stopped by floods. Consequently large towns have not arisen on the river banks. And again nearly the whole of this country is unfit for agriculture. Though the soil in many parts of it is rich, the climate will not allow the soil to produce wheat. The average rainfall is not above fourteen inches in the year,—and the summer heats are very intense. Nevertheless, in the southern parts of the district, and on the frontages of the rivers, free-selecters are numerous,—to the great and, as I think, irrational displeasure of the squatters, for the free-selecter, if he cannot live on his land, must work for the squatter's wages. To the south-east, around Albury and

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Wagga Wagga,—if on behalf of the Riverina we may venture to say that those towns are within its limits—wheat is grown. The rainfall here is greater and the heat less intense. But even in the localities named it seems to be a question whether cereals can be produced with sufficient constancy to repay the farmer. Nor is the Riverina a gold-producing district,—nor has it coal or copper. Gold has, I believe, been found within the limits above named, but not in sufficient quantities to attract a mining population. The Riverina is essentially a pastoral district, in which the squatters are patriarchs owning many flocks. But of all strictly pastoral districts of the world it is perhaps the best. As a wool-growing district I have no doubt as to its being the best in Australia. It consists of vast plains, a great part of which is completely without trees, and the whole of which is without hills or even rising ground. Where there is timber, the timber is light. And there is no stone,—not a particle of what the road-makers call metal,—in the country among the rivers. The houses are made of wood or brick. The roads are altogether unmade, and consist of tracks through the mud or dust. When anything is done towards the making of a road in or near the towns, clay is burned for the purpose into brickbats, or wooden blocks are used. The dust of Riverina I have never seen, but its mud is the most tenacious I ever encountered.

The secret of the wealth of the country for pastoral purposes lies in the salt which the soil possesses. A great proportion of the Riverina did, till lately, produce salt-bush,—a shrub about three feet high, pale in colour, and ugly to look at when it covers a whole plain, on which the sheep feed willingly, and which can stand great heat and great drought. I was told that the salt-bush was disappearing on runs which had carried sheep for many years, and that it certainly receded as the squatters advanced. But, though the salt-bush may go, the salt remains. Australian squatters who differ so widely among themselves on many pastoral questions,—who will dispute as to what breed of sheep is best, whether wool should be washed or shorn in the grease, whether, if washed, warm water should be used, whether

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sheep should be shorn early or late, whether wool should be sold in London or in the colonies,—are all agreed that a salt country is the best for sheep. In a salt country, though it seems to be as bare as a board, sheep will keep their condition,—and on a fat sheep wool will grow long and thick, while on a thin sheep the wool also will be thin. And on a plain country, sheep can be managed with very much less expense than among hills and valleys, and rock and thick timber. The knowledge that it is so comes upon the observer by degrees amidst infinite regrets. The plains of the Riverina are not lovely to look at. The observing stranger, placing himself for a while, as every observing stranger will do, in the shoes of the observed, declares to himself at first that he will squat and lead his sheep afield amidst the rocks and gullies and widely spreading forest trees. He will know nothing at that time of the difficulty of mustering sheep in the midst of such picturesque impediments; he will not as yet understand how dingoes, or wild dogs, are harboured by them; he will hardly calculate how much farther afield sheep must travel for their food where trees are plentiful and grass is scarce, than on the open prairies where the whole strength of the soil is devoted to the production of the herbage; nor will he probably know that the unromantic animals find the food sweeter on which the sun shines openly, than that which they find beneath the forest foliage. But the squatter who has been at work for a year or two amidst timber and hills, sighs for the salt plains, and dismisses his aptitudes for the picturesque to the winds.

Such is the Riverina;—a wide, open, ugly pastoral district, on which squatters prosper and grow rich. Of its settled towns it cannot boast much. The two largest in the area which I have attempted to define as belonging to the Riverina are, Albury and Wagga-Wagga, nearly equal in size, and containing each something under 2,000 inhabitants. But Albury and Wagga-Wagga are all but outside the district, and do not especially partake of its idiosyncrasies. Deniliquin is the capital of the Riverina, and Deniliquin, according to the census of 1871, only boasts of 1,118 inhabitants. And I was told in its neighbourhood that the boast

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was hardly true of the town,—as, in the making up of that number, a large adjacent section of country had been included for municipal purposes. Nevertheless, were Riverina a separate colony, divided off from the parent province as has been done with Victoria and Queensland, Deniliquin would probably be the chosen capital.

I should hardly have ventured to write a separate chapter on the Riverina district had not such a project of separation been entertained. I may as well say that as far as my own opinion goes,—which necessarily must be crude,—I think that the project will be renewed and consummated. I think also that this consummation, if effected, will be for the advantage of the district itself, and for that of the adjacent colonies,—including New South Wales, of which it at present forms a part. In order to explain the question as well as I may be able to do, and in giving a reason for my opinion, I must say a few more words on the terribly complicated and, I fear, rather tedious subject of the border-duties;—for the Riverina district, and almost that alone, is affected by them.

The government of Victoria have made a railway running north from Melbourne across the colony to Echuca, a little town on the Murray. They have, also, completed a second line running north-east from Melbourne to Woodonga, another small town higher up on the Murray, on the direct road to Sydney, and just opposite to Albury,—one of the towns I have mentioned as belonging to the Riverina. By the former of these railways, the wool and the sheep of the district,—in which the wealth of the district altogether consists,—are sent to Melbourne, and the stores required for the use of the squatters are brought back from that city. The second railway when completed will of course make the intercourse more close,—though the line to Echuca must always be the one on which the material prosperity of the Riverina must depend. The communication between this district and Sydney is by a succession of coaches till the New South Wales railway is reached at Goulbourn. Deniliquin is nearly 500 miles distant from Sydney, of which distance all but 130 miles must be travelled by coach. The

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roads are not made, and the average pace is about six miles an hour. But Deniliquin is reached by coach in six hours from Echuca. The cost and labour of passenger traffic are by no means the chief obstacles to close connection between the western and eastern parts of the colony; but they indicate the difficulty of other traffic. If a four-horse coach cannot get from Deniliquin to Goulbourn in less than eighty hours, a dray laden with wool, dragged throughout by the one team of horses or bullocks, will be nearly ten times as long. Hence has arisen the fact, that for all commercial purposes the Riverina depends on Melbourne and not on Sydney. In Melbourne it is often said that the money which has populated the plains of the Riverina with sheep is Victorian money, and that the squatting interests of the district have all been created by Victorian energy. The boast seems to me to be absurd. It might as well be said, on the other hand, that Victorian prosperity has arisen from Tasmanian energy, because many of the most prosperous graziers and wool-growers of Victoria found their way over to Port Phillip from Tasmania. The cluster of colonies is not only too small in population to admit of such divisions, but is too closely united by language, by nationality, by mutual dependence and loyalty to Great Britain, to allow of any real diversity of interests. Individual men may foster petty jealousies in their hearts, and politicians may fancy that they see an opening for their ambition in short-lived ascendency of this or the other colony; but the interest of one of these colonies is in truth the interest of them all; and to all Australia Melbourne and Sydney are as Manchester and Liverpool, or as Nottingham and Norwich, are to England. It should matter nothing whether the Riverina send her wool to Port Jackson or to Port Phillip,—whether she buy her tea at Sydney or at Melbourne,—except to the individual tradesmen and merchants concerned. What does matter is this,—that the Riverina itself should be allowed to prosper if she have the means of prosperity within her borders; that she should at any rate be hindered by no quarrelling among outside parties.

But she is terribly hindered. At the present moment, as

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I write, every article carried across the Murray is subject to the interference of the custom-house,—as things used to be subject, and perhaps will again become subject, between Dover and Calais. The Riverina and Victoria, instead of being to each other as are Lancashire and Yorkshire, or as are New York and New Jersey, are in reference to their custom-house laws as are France and Germany. That a real cordon of custom-house officers should be maintained along a line over 500 miles in length, on each side, by two provinces whose joint population is a million and a quarter, is, of course, out of the question. But the hostile arrangement is carried on at the points which permit of the greatest amount of injury and inconvenience, at Albury and at Echuca. Elsewhere also along the line,—but especially at those places,—duties are collected. Passengers, as far as I am aware, are allowed to take their luggage over unexamined. No custom-house officer troubled himself with mine either at the one place or at the other. Nor do the custom-house officers do so at many of the European barriers. The trouble would find no results to pay for itself, and the nuisance would be intolerable. But articles brought down for purposes of commerce are treated as though they were going from one country into another.

This folly will probably be soon abandoned.* A bill having this object may probably be passed. But in that case one folly will have been abandoned by means of another folly, by no means so irritating as the first, but as irrational. The one colony will again pay to the other a lump sum as the balance of exchange on behalf of these border duties. Victoria will pocket the duties collected on goods sent to the Riverina, and will pay £60,000 per annum to New South Wales. Goods will then be allowed to pass each way free,—in direct contravention of the terms of the constitution, which constitution in each colony gives to it its legal status, and is, in fact, so much British law equally binding

* Since this was written resort has been again had to the temporary expedient of a fixed sum settled between the colonies in lieu of border duties; but this is only an expedient, and the absurdity remains of custom duties chargeable between the colonies.

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on the colonies and on the mother country. By these terms Great Britain forbids her colonies to send their produce from one to another, except on payment of such duties as are levied on the same articles when imported from foreign countries. On the New South Wales side of the Murray wine is grown which finds its market in Melbourne. On the Hunter River also, in the northern portion of New South Wales, wine is grown which would find its market in Melbourne,—but that it is subjected to duty on entering Victoria by sea, as it must do if it enter Victoria at all. Under the arrangement, by which a lump sum is paid as balance by Victoria to New South Wales, the Murray wine will go free, in opposition to the British law; but the Hunter wine will be taxed, in obedience to the British law. The custom-house cordon will be maintained by sea, because it will not be absolutely unbearable;—but it will be abandoned by land, as constituting an infliction too irritating for men to endure.

I have endeavoured to make the matter plain,—not chiefly on account of these Murray border duties, which will probably be made to vanish, and which can hardly be of much interest to ordinary readers,—but because I would endeavour to make clear the fatal injury which the colonies endure by the collection of any custom duties between themselves. The greatest present want of Australia generally is unity with itself. That the colonies should have been divided for purposes of local government was indispensable to their success. The different interests of the different parts were too divergent to allow of their being duly considered at one centre; and the distances were far too great for parliamentary legislation to embrace the whole from one capital. Further separation will probably take place, and will take place to the advantage of the colonies. But the divisions already made, and any new divisions which may be made, are not incompatible with national unity, and certainly need not be accompanied by the all but hostile feeling, by the unloving and unbrotherly condition, which is inseparable from custom-houses between the one and the other. The Australians are surely as closely

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knit together as are the Swiss in their several cantons, or as were the Germans of different kingdoms, who, in spite of various nationalities and dynastic jealousies, consented to trade with each other under the Zollverein. But the strongest example of their position, or that which is in every respect the most like to them, is to be found in the United States. They speak the one language, are subject, in regard to their foreign relations, to one central head, are the home of a spreading people determined to rule themselves, and have each their separate legislature for the purpose of doing so;—but they do not declare war against each other by border tariffs and internal custom duties.

Downing Street will answer to this, that the war is not perpetuated there. Downing Street is very fond of free trade,—as indeed are all English streets and English people,—and does not at all prohibit the colonies from the free interchange of commodities among themselves, if only they will take them free from other countries. Downing Street also goes much farther than this, and will admit of a customs union between the colonies or between any two of them,—although such customs union would, in the opinion of Downing Street, inflict a grievous blow on free trade in the colonies by allowing them to import each other's goods while charging duties on foreign goods. And Downing Street now has gone still farther, and has said, under pressure, that if the colonies be imperious in their demands, she will permit them to import this or that article free, at their discretion,—adding, however, that any use of this permission in a direction hostile to free trade will have a tendency to loosen the bonds between the colonies and the mother country. Downing Street has all but given way in this matter,—and would give way altogether but that she fears to compromise herself by an apparent defalcation in regard to free trade. But there is no fairer ground for question of free trade in the matter than there would be between Middlesex and Surrey if the English parliament were to put a customs duty on some article of French produce, but which was produced also in one of those counties and

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carried thence into the other. The nationality between the Australian colonies is too close to admit of the doctrine of free trade having any bearing upon intercolonial commerce.

As the matter stands at present, Downing Street has simply notified her assent to a customs union between the colonies, should the colonies desire it. Two or three of them have agreed in principle to the arrangement, Tasmania having gallantly taken the lead. But the question has become so complicated among them by small diverse interests,—the jam-makers of Victoria, for instance, objecting to the free introduction of Tasmanian jam,—that no efforts made by some among themselves can, I fear, be successful. But if it were initiated from Downing Street,—if Downing Street would arrange the measure, and fashion the clauses, and give her earnest influence towards carrying it out,—it would be done. Victoria might not at first agree to it,—or Queensland,—or possibly New South Wales. But it would not require the agreement of all. Tasmania, South Australia, and New Zealand would agree. It is probable that the others would do so also, if the proposal were fairly made to them by the imperial government. But if three were combined,—if only two were combined,—not only with sanction from home, but also with British encouragement,—the union would soon grow till it included the whole.

In returning to the Riverina, I am bound to acknowledge that there has been proposed by many who are interested in her fate a remedy for the evil of border duties and for other evils, which is declared by them to be altogether effectual. But there must first be said a word as to those other evils. It has been explained that the Riverina is very far distant from Sydney; and it is thought by the people of the district that on this account she is greatly neglected by the Sydney parliament. She returns four members to a House of Assembly consisting of seventy-two members, having indeed her fair proportion according to her population. But what are four among so many? She cannot even "log-roll." If there be a proposition for spending public money in the north, or in the south, she is not strong enough to do aught by making her assent conditional on

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the spending of money also in the south-west. It must be remembered that very much is done in the colonies by public money which is with us accomplished either by private enterprise or by local contributions. Railways, bridges, and in a great measure roads also, are made out of taxes appropriated to that purpose by vote of the Assembly,—and are made under the superintendence, and are subject to the patronage, of a cabinet minister. How can any assembly be moved by four members; or what influence on a cabinet minister can be brought to bear by those forlorn ones? Consequently there are no roads, and no bridges, and not a mile of railway in the Riverina. But the Riverina pays taxes as do the other districts. When I was at Deniliquin an election was in progress for a member for the Murray district, and I heard the speeches. There were three candidates, and the man for the Murray,—which is the most centrically Riverinan of the constituencies of the Riverina,—was he who would give the loudest promise as to a certain bridge. The bridge ought to have been made years ago, connecting Victoria with New South Wales,—and the money had actually been borrowed for the Riverinan half of it. But not a pile had been driven, and now it was shrewdly guessed that an economical chancellor of the exchequer,—or treasurer as he is called in the colonies,—was going to swallow the money. I had not the slightest doubt in my own mind but that the money would be swallowed. But this or that gentleman, if returned, would hurry up to Sydney,—probably to arrive too late because of the mud and the distance,—and would take that treasurer by the throat, if only he could get so far before the process of swallowing was completed. But it was manifest that not one man in the room expected the bridge, although the money had been voted,—and borrowed for the express purpose. What did Sydney want of a bridge over the Murray? Did not every one know that Sydney was more anxious to increase than to curtail the distance between herself and Melbourne? Candidates must say something, and it was as easy to promise a bridge as anything else. The feeling was general that nothing was to be expected from a

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Sydney parliament. Why should not the Riverina be annexed to Victoria?

The question was not asked at that meeting, as with the majority of those there assembled it would have been unpopular, but I heard it asked very often outside. In Victoria I have heard it put as though there could be but one answer to it. The genuine Victorian thinks that annexation to Victoria would be a road to fame and fortune for any colony or any nation. The inhabitants of Port Phillip, having separated themselves from New South Wales, would annex their parent to-morrow without compunction. But they will first annex Tasmania and Riverina. The Riverinans, however,—as also the Tasmanians,—do not seem to be in love with Victorian practices. Their deputies would be lost in the Victorian Assembly,—quite as much as those from the Riverina are now lost at Sydney; and, after a while, lawyers from Melbourne would represent them, receiving £300 per annum for their labour in doing so. And the Victorian land laws,—which have made themselves peculiarly odious to Victorian squatters,—are not at all to the liking of the Riverinan squatters. The Victorian Assembly might no doubt make promises as to pastoral leases, might declare that the sauce with which the goose to the south of the Murray had been cooked and eaten, should never be warmed up again on behalf of the gander in the Riverina;—but it is hard to bind a parliament by a promise, or to obtain obligations from a nation. There is a class of spiritual beings among whom, if you must be troubled by such an attendant, it is generally thought better to have an old friend than a stranger. The Riverinans do not much regard Sydney,—but they prefer Sydney to Melbourne.

It is well that it should be so, as it cannot be for the interests of Australia at large that the colony which is at present the most populous and the most important should be made greater and more important by annexing her sisters. It is for the advantage of England and of Englishmen,—for England will continue to feed Australia with Englishmen,—and of Australia and Australians, not that Victoria should be ascendant, but that Australia should

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be well governed and prosperous. That good government and prosperity would be promoted by a federation of the colonies, no one, I think, denies,—though there are various opinions as to the period at which such federation should, or can, be accomplished. Among the measures which will tend to produce federation, none will probably be so efficacious as the division of those colonies which are now too large in area for government from a central parliament in itself too weak in its elements to spread its arms afar; and among those which might retard federation none certainly would be so fatally strong as the increased preponderance of any one colony over the others. The preponderance of Victoria is at present the drawback most to be dreaded;—and to that a most injurious addition would be made,—not only as regards population, but in pride also,—were another colony or a section of one to add itself to the Victorian borders.

The only other remedy for the Riverina is Separation;—or, in other words, a setting up for herself among the colonies. That argument which I have attempted to use against customs duties would undoubtedly be a strong argument against further separation, if the continuance of such a barrier between cognate colonies were a necessity. Who would willingly multiply such barriers, and accumulate the sure means of intercolonial irritation? But if we look forward to a grouping of these Australian colonies under some form of government which may be combined in regard to external matters, but be separate as to local matters,—such as is the form of government adopted in the United States,—then the arguments against a small colony, or a poor colony, or a colony sparsely inhabited, fall to the ground. In saying this I trust that I may not be considered as specially advocating what we at home call "American institutions." Of those institutions this is not the place to speak. But the institutions necessary for the combined colonies would be no inch nearer to American institutions, and would be no inch farther removed from British institutions, than those which are at present used. Indeed I know not that any institution would be changed,—that any single "Palladium of British liberty" would be altered by the clipping of a hair. But I name the union of

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the American States as giving the best example which modern history affords us of a secure federation of self-governing communities.

There are, no doubt, objections which can be urged against such separation as that proposed, not only plausibly, but rationally;—objections which would perhaps be fatal, if the system of government in the Australian colonies, as at present administered, admitted of no change. The population of the Riverina is but 28,000, and it would seem to be absurd to saddle so small a body of people with all the expenses of a government house and a parliament, on the scale now adopted in the Australian colonies. It might be alleged, in answer to this, that when the separation of Queensland from New South Wales was sanctioned, the population of Queensland was under 18,000, and that in 1861, two years after its separation, it had only reached 30,000;—but it must be acknowledged, in behalf of Queensland, that her external circumstances gave better promise of a quickly increasing population than do those of the Riverina. The population of Queensland is now 125,000, and she supports what, for the sake of distinction, I will call a full-fledged government and a full-fledged parliamentary establishment. She is a bold, pushing colony, and will herself, probably, soon endure further separation. The progress of the Riverina will necessarily be slower,—but it may perhaps be well to accept such an opportunity as she would offer for ascertaining whether a separate colonial state may not be set on foot, with advantage to herself and to the group to which she belongs, on a more moderate footing.

If it be allowed that a federation of the colonies would be for the advantage of the colonies, it will also, I think, be allowed that a federation of small states and of many states will be more easily constructed than one consisting of few and large states. That there should be equality of size between them is out of the question,—and with inequality of size there will of course be inequality of influence. Rhode Island and Delaware do not loom so large among the United States as New York and Pennsylvania. But Rhode Island and Delaware hold their own, govern themselves, and assist in forming a great nationality. Victoria

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and New South Wales may probably feel a mitigated jealousy in giving some co-ordinate power in a confederation to so small a people as that of the Riverina, when they remember that Virginia, New York, and Pennsylvania united themselves with Rhode Island and Delaware, on a basis which gave two senators each to small and to great states alike.

It is urged also, as a reason against such a measure, that the Riverina has no seaboard. Nor has Bohemia, as all readers of Shakespeare are taught to remember; nor have any of the Swiss cantons; nor had a dozen German nationalities; nor have half the states of the American Union. If a separate nationality, with custom duties and the like, be required for each political division of Australia, then seaboard may be essential. But if any unity be desired for Australia,—if the Australians of next century are to be one great people, instead of being denizens of a dozen little provinces,—then we may allow this question of seaboard to be passed as answered. It is not to be expected that another Melbourne will grow up in the Riverina;—nor that a Liverpool will establish itself in Oxfordshire. But Oxfordshire can hold its own among the counties by other influences than those to be derived from a great seaport.

In all these colonies the government is entirely centralized, and it is perhaps necessary that it should be so in new countries. When a small community is first established on some shore far distant from its parent country, the power of ruling must for a time rest in the hands of a few. Without such rule, there would be turmoil, anarchy, and destruction. But the effect of such centralized power is not, after awhile, beneficial to those who have wandered to a distance from the centre. They are not only disregarded, but they are taxed for the benefit of those who by their greater numbers are enabled to help themselves. It was the feeling of this unavoidable injustice which produced the various separations which have already taken place among the Australian colonies, and which will produce further separation. The Riverina would soon have roads and bridges,—would soon have a railway from Deniliquin to Echuca, if she stood so far alone as to have the management of her own internal finances for her own internal purposes.

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QUEENSLAND.

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QUEENSLAND.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY AND PRESENT STATE OF THE COLONY.

QUEENSLAND calls itself the biggest of the English colonies. South Australia, however, may dispute the question with her, as her territories run through from the southern to the northern coast. The Queenslanders boast that Queensland is larger than England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark, added together. There is room enough therefore for all the energies of all its possible future inhabitants for many years to come. It now contains 120,000 inhabitants,—and is therefore, in point of population, inferior to many a second-rate English or American city. But it owes a public debt of four million pounds, and spends a public revenue of about £800,000 a year, or nearly £7 a head. Justice is administered and property protected at the rate of £1 per head for every inhabitant of the colony. At the same rate in the British Isles the administration of justice would cost over thirty millions! To a poor Englishman who has all his life heard English taxation complained of as an incubus which no nation can long bear, these amounts seem to threaten instant ruin; but in a young colony they are not much feared, and at least a moiety of the politicians of Queensland seem to think that the welfare of the community is chiefly impeded by a niggardly parsimony which is afraid of a good lively debt, and is not sufficiently awake to the advantages which accrue

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from a plentiful scattering of public money. In speaking of the taxation of the colony, it must be remembered that a portion of the public revenue arises from the sale of public lands, and is not therefore felt as a direct impost by the people. But the amount so brought annually to the public credit is not nearly as large as I had expected. The average for the last ten years has been £170,000 per annum. This leaves the amount to be collected from taxes £630,000 per annum, or about £5 5*s*. per head.

Queensland was separated from New South Wales in 1859, as had been Victoria in 1850, and the name was given to the new colony by her Majesty. The question of separation had been mooted for the last nine or ten years, and with it the other question,—hardly less important than separation itself,—whether the new colony should or should not receive convicts. All the world knows that Queensland as a separate colony has never taken convicts, nor were convicts sent to its districts since 1850. In that year the last ship-load of English ruffians was landed on her shores. But the question was one open to much discussion. In the old days, Moreton Bay,—as the district was called in which Brisbane, the present capital of Queensland, is situated, —was a penal settlement dependent on the Government of New South Wales. It was so named by Captain Cook in 1770. Though it kept its name, it seems to have attracted no notice till 1823—24 and '25. A penal settlement for doubly dyed ruffians was then founded at Moreton Bay, where Brisbane now stands, and many of the public works, and not a little of the cultivation of the lands round Brisbane, are due to the forced labour of these unfortunates. When the great question was being mooted within the would-be new colony, its whole population did not exceed 15,000 souls. Among the pastoral aspirants,—squatters as my readers must learn to call them,—the want of labour was the one great difficulty of these days. The squatter, alone, was not afraid of the convict. The freeman, whose lot it would be to work alongside of him should he come, and the shopkeepers, and the small nascent agriculturists, did not wish for him. It was therefore decided that the

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colony should never take convicts, and it has never taken them. What became of those who had been sent thither up to that date, it is hard to say. They have been so thoroughly absorbed, that one hears little or nothing about them in Queensland,—much less than is heard in New South Wales. It may occasionally happen that a gentleman who has been unfortunate in his youth forces his way up to some place of note, in the legislature or elsewhere, and then a whisper is heard abroad that the gentleman came to the colony in the old-fashioned way. Otherwise, one hears but little of convicts in Queensland.

Before Queensland became a separate colony, the only great commercial interest of the country was pastoral,—including the breeding, rearing, and shearing of sheep, and the care of cattle. The country had been taken up by squatters in large masses up to the line of the tropics, and even within the line. In 1858, just before separation was effected, the first gold rush was made to Canoona, which is just on the line. Since that there have been gold rushes in various parts of the colony, and new rushes are still made from time to time. Having said so much, we will now take Queensland as an established colony, and make no further reference to its ancient history. I have already spoken of its dimensions. I trust to spare my readers many references to maps, as I wish to write of men and their manners and welfare, rather than of rivers and boundaries, and such references are always troublesome; but one slight glimpse at the maps furnished of each of the colonies may be beneficial. It will be seen that Queensland is bisected by the tropic of Capricorn; I have therefore called it semi-tropical. In the way of fruit it produces grapes, oranges, and pineapples, but not apples, gooseberries, or currants. Wheat has been produced, but not so as to pay the grower of it. Oats are grown, but are cut green or half ripe and made into hay. Cotton is grown in the southern parts of the settled districts, but only in small patches. It has not as yet become one of the staples of the country, nor do I think it ever will. Sugar is produced largely, and will probably become the great rival of the

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wool trade. Cattle do well in most of the various districts, but the distance from the necessary markets makes the trade precarious. Gold-rushing is of all pursuits,—here as in all gold-producing countries,—the most alluring and the most precarious. There is a considerable trade in timber, especially from the rivers on which the town of Maryborough stands. And vineyards have been made, the owners of which make wine, and think that in a little time they will make good wine. I have drunk fairly good wine made in Australia, but none made in Queensland. If on this head any wine-growing Queensland squatter should accuse me of falsehood,—remembering the assenting smile with which I have seemed to acknowledge that his vintage was excellent,—let him reflect how impossible it is for the guest to repudiate the praises with which the host speaks of his own cellar. All the world over it is allowed to the giver to praise his own wine,—a privilege of which Australians avail themselves; but it is not allowed to the receiver to deny the justness of such encomium, except under circumstances of peculiar intimacy. Here, in these pages, truth must prevail; and I am bound to say that Queensland wine was not to my taste. I am delighted to acknowledge that their pineapples were perfect.

By the last land act of the colony—that of 1868—to which I must often refer, Queensland was divided into settled and unsettled districts. The former consists of the whole seacoast line, varying in breadth from about two hundred to about twenty miles. The unsettled districts stretch back over vast distances, from the 152nd to the 138th meridian of longitude. Within the narrow line of the settled districts are all the towns which can be called towns, the best of the sheep stations, most of the gold mines, all the navigable rivers,—which, as is the case throughout Australia, are few and but poorly gifted,—and, as a matter of course, the great bulk of the population. In the unsettled districts pastoral pursuits,—that is the wool trade and the cattle trade,—progress, but do so slowly. That great difficulty of immigration,—which in Queensland has been especially great,—prevents that speedy filling up of the back



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country which has been the making of the American Western States.

It may be as well to say a few words here about Queensland immigration. The colony, from the first, has been quite alive to the expediency,—it may almost be said the necessity,—of bidding high for Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, and has been tempted to bid too high. There have been various acts passed by the legislature of the colony with the object of inducing persons to come out and occupy land in Queensland on terms profitable to themselves; passages have been paid for them and land allotted on certain terms; and to those who would pay for their own passages, lands have been allotted on other terms, more seductive of course. Endeavour has been to make the "land orders,"—the orders under which the land was to be given up to the immigrants,—not transferable; so that the man with his family whose passage had been paid out of the colony's revenue, or the other comer who had paid for his own passage with the object of obtaining the fuller grant of land, should be a bonâ-fide beneficent Queensland immigrant, and not simply a traveller passing through the colony, availing himself of the liberality of the colony with the view of going on elsewhere,—and, in fact, robbing the colony by selling his land orders. But these not transferable land orders granted under the Immigration Act of 1864 were sold, and the poorer class of immigrants who had come out with free passages did pass on to other lands. Emigrants from home did come to Queensland with the express view of leaving it, after they had used its liberality. In 1869, there came from the British Isles to Queensland 1,635 souls,—1,635 souls over and above the comparatively small number who had returned home. And in that year 2,272 souls left Queensland for the other Australian colonies,—2,272 souls over and above the number that came into Queensland from the other Australian colonies. So that not only did Queensland lose in that year all its immigrants from England, but sent also 637 emigrants to the other Australian colonies. Now this was by no means what Queensland meant when she made her liberal over-

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tures to the would-be emigrant from our own islands; nor is it the way in which any young colony can prosper. It was simply a wasting of her funds. She therefore passed another immigration law in 1869,—which is now in force,—the express intention of which is to compel those who take land orders in Queensland to live on the land so bestowed, and also to compel those who accept assisted passages or free passages to work out within the colony the money which has been expended on them. Great dissatisfaction already prevails because they who have recently brought out themselves and families under the recent act cannot sell their land orders or avail themselves of the land without residence. They have thought that the old plan of transfering non-transferable orders would still be practicable. There is ground for hope therefore that the colony will no longer be defrauded in that direction. But I fear much success will not attend the giving of free or assisted passages. They who accept them bind themselves to repay to the government within a stated time £8 for assisted or £16 for free passages,—and when such payments have been made, orders for land are given to them. But there is nothing to prevent such persons from re-emigrating; and it seems clear that it is their practice to do so.

That such practice should be general must probably be taken as evidence that the colony among colonies is not popular. It implies that Queensland had found it necessary to offer higher bounties than have sufficed with the other colonies,—or these re-emigrating immigrants would not trouble themselves to come to Queensland in the first instance; and it implies also that when she has got her dearly purchased immigrants she cannot keep them. This no doubt is so at the present period of her career. One cause of this will probably not be permanent,—the greatly superior success namely of the New Zealand gold-diggings. What number of men go from Queensland to New Zealand cannot be told, as the route is viâ Sydney, and these gold-seekers are therefore counted among those who depart to the other Australian colonies; but that the number has been great there is no doubt. The next cause may probably be

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found in the heat of the climate, and must be permanent. Setting aside for the present the allurements of gold, I think that wheat-growing countries offer the greatest inducements to the class of men who generally emigrate from our own islands. In Queensland the bounties offered to immigrants are bestowed chiefly with the view of creating a class of small farmers,—men who shall select small portions of the Crown lands, by means of land orders or by gradual purchase, and who shall become freeholders and thus permanently wedded to the colony. But a small farmer must have a convenient market for his produce before he can thrive, and must be able to produce what that market demands. The world wants wheat, but the Queensland farmer cannot produce it. Queensland produces wool and meat, and sugar, but these things as articles of trade are generally beyond the reach of the small farmer. Indian corn, or maize, is grown on these small farms, and oaten hay, and something is done in the manufacture of butter. But the markets for these things are bad. The farmer with his Indian corn is generally forced to take other goods for his produce—tea, or clothes, or perhaps rum. Wheat he could no doubt sell for money. Such being the case, the prospect to the small farmers is not good, and they who manage things in the colony not unnaturally find a difficulty in establishing permanent agriculturists on their soil.

The term "free-selecters" used above is one with which the traveller soon finds himself very intimately acquainted in the Australian colonies, and if he be fortunate enough to become hand and glove with the squatters, he always hears it as a term of reproach. The normal squatter hates the "free-selecter" almost as thoroughly as the English country gentleman hates the poacher. In explaining the condition of the Queensland free-selecter, it is necessary to state that a considerable portion of a squatter's run within the settled districts is always open to be selected by any human being above twenty-one years of age. You, oh reader ignorant of your privilege, may go at once and select no less than 10,280 acres on the run of any Queensland squatter within the line of settled districts who has so much as yet un-

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selected, and unprotected by the present laws from immediate selection. You may take not less than 210 nor more than 640 acres of agricultural land at 15*s.* an acre; also, if you please, not less than 80 or more than 2,560 of first-class pastoral land at 10*s.* an acre;—and also, if you are so minded, not less than 80 or more than 7,680 acres of second-class pastoral land at 10*s.* an acre; and for these purchases you need only pay a tenth of the price the first year, and so on for ten years, when the whole estate will be your own. Or, if you be more humble,—and are not a married woman,—you may free-select a nice little farm of 80 acres of agricultural land, or 160 of pastoral, on still easier terms. This you do under the homestead clause;—but as to this you are bound down to residence. This you have at 9*d.* an acre per annum for agricultural land, or 6*d.* for pastoral, and if at the end of five years you shall have lived on it continually, and have either fenced it in or cultivated the tenth of it, it is yours for ever with an undefeasible title-deed without further payment. Now 80 acres out of a squatter's run is nothing. Even 10,280 acres out of a large run is not much. But one squatter may be subject to many free-selecters; and when the free-selecter makes his selection with the express object of stealing the squatter's cattle,—as the squatter often believes to be the case,—the squatter of course omits to love his neighbour as himself.

It must be understood that from this order of things arises a very different condition of feeling with regard to land from that to which we are subject at home. With us the owner of the land, the freeholder, is the big man, and he who holds by lease is the little man. In the Australian colonies the squatter who holds his run by lease from the Crown, and who only purchases in order to keep others from purchasing, and who is half ruined by being compelled thus to become the owner of the soil, is the big man; whereas the freeholder, who has free-selected his holding, is the little man. But he is in no degree dependent on the squatter, and their interests are altogether at variance.

There has, however, latterly arisen a point of junction between the classes which does to a certain degree bring

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them together. The squatter when he washes and shears his sheep,—during the period, that is, of his harvest,—requires a great deal of temporary labour. Now the free-selecters cannot live on their farms, and are consequently glad to hire themselves out during three or four months of the year as washers and shearers. For this work they receive high wages,—and rations, which enable them to take their earnings home with them. It is always for the advantage both of the employed and of employers that they should think well of each other, and hence some kindly feeling does spring up tending to allay the irritation as to cattle-stealing on the one side, and the anger produced by contempt and perhaps by false accusation on the other. The squatter's money is necessary to the free-selecter, and the free-selecter's labour is necessary to the squatter, and in this way the two classes amalgamate.

In this great question between the squatter and the free-selecter of land,—for with its different ramifications in regard to immigration, agricultural produce, and pastoral success, it is the greatest of all questions in Australian life,—it is almost impossible for the normal traveller not to sympathize with the squatter. The normal traveller comes out with introductions to the gentlemen of the colony, and the gentlemen of the colony are squatters. The squatters' houses are open to him. They introduce the traveller to their clubs. They lend their horses and buggies. Their wives and daughters are pretty and agreeable. They exercise all the duties of hospitality with a free hand. They get up kangaroo hunts and make picnics. It is always pleasant to sympathize with an aristocracy when an aristocracy will open its arms to you. We remember republican Mrs. Beecher Stowe with her sunny memories of duchesses. But the traveller ought to sympathize with the free-selecter,—alway premising that the man keeps his hands from picking and stealing his neighbour's cattle. He, we may say, is the man for whom colonial life and colonial prosperity is especially intended, and without whom no colony can rise to national importance. The pastoral squatter occupying tens of thousands of acres, and producing wool that has made Australia what she now

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is, has done great things for the infancy of the country. But in all discussions on this question it must be remembered that he has no right to the permanent occupation of the land on which his flocks wander. Even though he may have purchased the use of his present run and purchased it for a high price, the land is not his. It belongs to the people of the colony; and should be sold or leased or retained as may be best for the public advantage. The squatter's run, in ordinary colonial language, has been taken up by some original squatter who has driven his sheep or his cattle on it when it knew no other occupant than the black man. In the very early days of squatting some attempts were made to connect this occupation with possession; but this was at once refused by the Crown, which peremptorily and most properly asserted its own rights. When independent government was conceded to the Australian colonies, these rights became the right of the people, and squatters held their runs and knew that they held their runs simply as tenants under the government which acted as agent for the people. Nor have these tenants been in possession of leases running over any long term of years. The rents which they pay are, at any rate in Queensland, hardly more than nominal, and no fixity of tenure has ever been accorded to them. In Queensland, by the land act of 1868, every squatter's run was divided into two moieties, of which one moiety was at once made open to free-selection, whereas the other moiety cannot be touched by free-selecters till 1878,—unless a further land act giving further power of free selection should be passed before that time. When the law of 1868 was passed it was perfectly understood that no tenure even for the ten years was given to the squatters of the moieties which were then left to them. The lands were public lands and not their lands. The area open to squatters in Queensland is so vast, and genuine free-selecters unfortunately are so few in number and so limited in means, that there need be no fear that the squatter will be banished from the face of the colony. Of his own condition I shall speak in a further chapter; but in the mean time it should be understood that the encourage-

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ment of the free-selecter,—of the genuine free-selecter who intends to cultivate and reside upon the land,—is and should be the first aim of colonial government. A race of men, who will people the earth at the rate, say of a soul to fifty acres, must be more important to a young community than an aristocracy which hardly employs one man permanently for every ten thousand acres. Population is the thing required, and, above all, an agricultural population. But agriculturists, especially on a small scale, do not love a land that does not produce wheat. Hence the difficulty;—but on this account our warmer sympathies should be given to those who make the attempt, and every possible effort should be made to induce such men to settle upon the land.

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CHAPTER II.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.

On my first arrival at Brisbane I spent but a few days there, and then hurried up north to Rockhampton, again endeavouring to anticipate the heat. Brisbane is a commodious town, very prettily situated on the Brisbane River, with 12,000 inhabitants, with courts of justice, houses of parliament, a governor's residence, public gardens, and all the requirements of a capital for a fine and independent colony. It must be understood that the voyaging of Australia is chiefly done by steamboat, and on this occasion I went on by steamboat from Brisbane to Rockhampton. On our route we stopped at Maryborough and Gladstone. Of Maryborough I will speak in reference to the return journey. Of Gladstone I will say a few words now. It is a seaport in the so-called Port Curtis district, and a prettier spot or more melancholy town than Gladstone one could hardly find in any country, new or old. It received its name, of course, from our own statesman, and is said to have been peculiarly favoured by him. It has been spoken of as the future capital of Queensland, and there are many in Queensland, —including the present premier of the colony,—who think that it should be selected, as was Ottawa in Canada, because it has the double advantage of a somewhat central position, —on the coast,—and of possessing nothing to offend the jealousies either of Brisbane to the south, or Rockhampton to the north. Other apparent fitnesses for a capital it has none,—except that of a fine harbour. Though it has been essentially fostered by the affections of certain politicians,

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that first primary necessity of a city, population, has refused to cleave to it. The busy part of the town, consisting of a little wharf, two or three stores, and a custom-house, stands about a quarter of a mile up a small creek just broad enough to allow the steamboats to be turned in it. The creek opens into a magnificent harbour,—magnificent in scenery certainly, and equally so, I should imagine, for the use of ships lying at anchor; but for vessels to lie against the shore, the little muddy creek at present affords the only useful spot. But a fine harbour and beautiful scenery will not make a city,—or even help to make one, unless people can find on its shores the means of earning their bread. Gladstone is land-locked by mountains, and has no back country to support it. There is nothing there to produce trade, or to induce people to choose the place as a domicile favourable to their hopes in life.

When at Rockhampton I was at once initiated into the great question of "Separation." Rockhampton is a town lying exactly on the line of the tropic of Capricorn, some miles up the Fitzroy River, with about seven thousand inhabitants, which considers itself to be the second town of the colony, and thinks a good deal of itself. It has been seized with the ambition to become a capital, and therefore hates Brisbane. It is so hot that people going from it to an evil place are said to send back to earth for their blankets, finding that evil place to be too chilly for them after the home they have left. But the Rockhamptonites are energetic, as become the aspirants to metropolitan honours. They do, in truth, do those things which are necessary for the well-being of a community. They have a hospital,—and an excellent hospital it is; also a jail, not so excellent; a good hotel,—or, as I was assured, one or two good hotels; wide streets; a grand post-office,—they ought to keep it open for the accommodation of the public after six o'clock in the evening, and no doubt would do so if they knew that here in England post-offices are not closed at the earliest before nine. They have excellent shops, a good quay, and they have a railway. Perhaps the railway is the crowning glory of Rockhampton.

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I must say a word of the Rockhampton railway, and it certainly will not be a word in praise. I have my regrets, for I was carried over it free of charge, and was accompanied by the gentleman who manages it, and who made himself very pleasant on the occasion. Nevertheless I can say nothing good of the Rockhampton railway. It was made as a job, and now that it is made it is not only useless but infinitely worse than useless. It would be a great saving to the colony if it could be shut up and abandoned. I asked in my innocence whether, independent of the cost of making, it supported itself,—whether it paid for its own working. I was told that it about paid for the grease used upon it. Now the cause and meaning of the Rockhampton railway may be described as follows: Queensland, a colony vast in extent, as has been described, was at first populated in her southern districts, those which were contiguous to New South Wales, from which she had succeeded in separating herself. But even at the time of her separation, a small and scattered few had driven their cattle up to the hotter northern lands. Then there were gold rushes, and boiling-down establishments,—some explanation of which shall be given presently; and so the town of Rockhampton was formed, while the population and prosperity of Queensland was as yet in her southern borders,—round Brisbane, and the towns of Ipswich, Warwick, and Toowoomba, and on the Darling Downs. It was then deemed expedient that there should be a railway in the South,—not running out of Brisbane, which has easy water communication with Ipswich; but from Ipswich to the other towns above named, and so across the Darling Downs, where are the grand sheep-walks of that country. It must be understood that railways in Australia, with one or two exceptions, have been made by government,—as hitherto have all roads, river clearances, and the like. The government makes the railway and works it, taking and expending the money, and doing all by the hands of official servants. That it should be so is to me distressing. Whether or no the practice is necessary shall not be discussed now, but at any rate such is the fact. But the government can only make its railway when the legislature has sanctioned

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the making of it, and the borrowing of the money for the purpose. When the making of the Darling Down railway was mooted,—by which undoubtedly the produce of a very fine district would be brought down to the sea, and the people of various towns would be brought within easy reach of the metropolis,—no very strong objection seems to have been raised to the scheme. It was not much debated whether or no the young colony could or could not bear the weight of the borrowed millions. But this was debated, and made very clear in debate,—that if the southern division of the colony had its railway, then also must the northern. The southern population were ten times greater than the northern no doubt. Well;—then let the southern railway be ten times greater than the northern. But if the Darling Downs people were to have their railway, then should Rockhampton have its railway. On no other terms would any northern member dare to vote the appropriation of the money. Unless this were done, Rockhampton, which is not a meek place nor forbearing in its nature, would make such a row that the colony should split to pieces with it. It had to be done, and hence there are thirty miles of a railway that barely pays for its own grease. It goes out thirty miles to three public-houses in the forest which call themselves Westwood; but it does not get the traffic incident to these thirty miles, because for so short a distance it is not worth the while of waggoners, who take down wool and bring back stores, to unload their burden. The squatters can communicate with Rockhampton cheaper by the old way than by using thirty miles of railroad.

And yet we can hardly blame Rockhampton. I fancy that had I been a Rockhamptonite I should have been eager for my railway. Why should Rockhampton submit to a debt, and pay taxes, in order that the wool of Darling Downs should get to market at a cheaper rate than the wool from their own districts? That question of levying taxes and spending public money for other purposes than those of direct government, including the defence and protection of the nation, is very seducing and very dangerous. There has been a hankering among statesmen at home after govern-

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ment railways, and an idea that a patriarchal government would do better for the country than competing companies. There is still, I believe, a desire with some politicians to buy up the railways at any rate in Ireland. When a government can make ever so much a year by monopolizing telegraphs, it may seem to be very well;—but when a government has to lose ever so much a year by distributing railways, it is surely very bad. The Rockhampton and Westwood railway is the very bathos of such attempts.

And this brings me to the great subject of Separation, which I found to be in every man's mouth at Rockhampton. Separation nowadays in Queensland means the division of that colony into two colonies, as in old days it meant the division of New South Wales into two or more colonies. Though Queensland is hardly in her teens, she is already held by the people of her northern districts to be ready for further division. Let there be Queensland and—Albertland some wish to call the would-be future colony. Why should taxes levied in the north go to make roads round Brisbane? Why should northern legislators travel four, five, six, and seven hundred miles to a southern town built on the very borders of New South Wales? Why should we northerners, with our unlimited area, our high ambition, with a great future looming upon us in gold and sugar, be sacrificed to Brisbane and the Darling Downs? Brisbane is hated at Rockhampton, but I think that the Darling Downs are more odious. It must be remembered always that the Darling Downs squatters are the aristocrats of Queensland, and are about as much in favour at Rockhampton as a marquis is at Manchester. We have, say these northern men, ten, fifteen, or twenty thousand inhabitants,—according as the line may be drawn. Let us have a governor of our own,—and, above all, the privileges of legislation. We are old enough to go alone, and go alone we will. The sweat of our brow shall no longer go to Brisbane.

But where shall the line be drawn? Just south of Rockhampton say the Rockhamptonites, so that the new colony, the finest that will bear the flag of England, may have this well-built, elegantly organized, and populous town for its

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capital,—a town with real streets and hotels, with a grand post-office and a railroad. What more can a colony desire? But in that case Rockhampton also would be at the extremity, and the people north of that,—ay, five hundred miles to the north of it, as any man may see by looking at the map,—would have to send the sweat of their brows to that city. The coming golden era of sugar and northern gold is destined to bless a region nearer to the sun even than Rockhampton. Let Cape Palmerston be the point, and Bowen or Townsville the new capital. And so the matter is debated. With this question of course is mixed up that other question of moving the capital from Brisbane to Gladstone,—by which some southern politicians think that the difficulty may be tided over, and separation avoided for a time. Brisbane is certainly very much in a corner.

As to the intrinsic merits of the case, one is tempted to say,—on this as on almost all political questions connected with the colonies,—that the more men can divert their minds from such questions to their own individual interests, the better for them. There must be politicians among young colonists, and there must be houses of legislation, but the less there is of ambition in that direction, the quicker will fortunes be made and families established. The future sugar-grower of Port Mackay will not be so much injured by sending taxes to Brisbane as by having to devote his time to some nearer little parliament, whether in Rockhampton or Townsville. Parliaments, with their debates and all that volubility of words which Mr. Carlyle hates with such genuine vigour, are dear to my heart. Parliaments are to me the very salt of the earth. But, at the first glance, one is driven to doubt the expediency of a fresh parliament for ten thousand people,—the population of a one-membered borough at home,—when that ten thousand has so little of which to complain as have at present the inhabitants of Northern Queensland.

An Englishman cannot be a month in Australia without finding himself driven to speculate,—almost driven to come to some conclusion as to the future destinies of the colonies. At present they are loyal to England with an expressive and almost violent loyalty of which we hear and see little at

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home. There may be causes of quarrel on this or that subject of custom duties and postal subsidies. One colony may expostulate with a Secretary of State at home in language a little less respectful than another, in accordance with the temperament of the minister of the moment. But the feeling of the people is one of affectionate adherence to England, with some slight anger caused by a growing idea that England is becoming indifferent. The withdrawal of our troops, especially from New Zealand, has probably done more than anything else to produce an apprehension which is certainly unnecessary and, to my thinking, irrational. But the love of the colonies for England, and the Queen, and English government,—what may best probably be described as the adherence of the colonies to the mother country,—cannot be doubted. An Australian of the present day does not like to be told of the future independence of Australia. I think that I met no instance in which the proposition on my part was met with an unqualified assent. And yet it can hardly be doubted that the independence of Australia will come in due time. But other things must come first. Before that day shall arrive the bone and sinews of the colonies must be of colonial produce. The leading men must not only have lived but have been born in Australia, so as to have grown up into life without the still-existing feeling that England is their veritable "home." And I venture to express an opinion that another great change must have come first, as to the coming of which there is at present certainly no sign. The colonies will join themselves together in some Australian federation, as has been done with our North American provinces, and will learn the political strength and commercial advantage of combined action. But there are difficulties in the way of such a union, which existed indeed in reference to the Canadas, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, but which make themselves felt with much greater violence in Australia. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were hardly strong enough to persist in their jealous fears of a stronger sister, and the two Canadas had already become one before the Dominion was framed. The Australian colonies are very jealous of each other, and in their present moods are by no means ready to unite. Victoria

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claims supremacy, New South Wales disputes it, and Queensland looks to a future in which she shall become as large as either. South Queensland, thus ambitious, by no means desires internal separation;—but in all probability separation not only in Queensland, but further separation in New South Wales and in South Australia, will come before the federal union which will precede absolute independence. As Maine and New Hampshire were allowed to become States in the early days of American independence, as Kentucky was separated from Virginia, and Tennessee from North Carolina, so will Albertland,—by that or another name,—be divided from Queensland, the Riverinan districts from New South Wales, and some great northern province from South Australia. Whether Victoria will ever submit to division I will not venture to prophesy,—but even that may come. And thus a union of States will be formed infinitely stronger in its interests than can be any one of the colonies as they now exist.

On my way up to Rockhampton, at Maryborough, and again at Rockhampton, and at other places in the colonies, I went through the unsavoury duty of inspecting various meat-preserving establishments, to which is, as a matter of course, attached the still more distressing occupation of boiling down tallow. I should not like to meat-preserve or boil down myself, though I am assured that no more healthy employment can be found. The boiling down is an old trade in Australia, and has followed naturally on the growth of wool. Something has to be done with the dead sheep, and tallow can at any rate be exported. The sheep used to be boiled down without any reference to meat, and as they were of course bought at a proportionate price the boiling-down trade was not a bad one. That of preserving meat and sending it over to Europe is more speculative, and will be infinitely more important if it can be carried on successfully. With mutton at 1o*d.* a pound in England and 2*d.* a pound in Australia there seems to be a large margin for expense and profit, if only the thing can be done so as to make the meat popular in England. If there be one thing that England wants and cannot get,—or at any rate has not yet gotten,—it is cheap animal food for her working classes.

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Before I left England I bought some Australian preserved meat as an experiment, and for that I then paid *6d.* a pound. It was sweet and by no means unpalatable, but was utterly tasteless as meat. Whether it did or did not contain the nutritive qualities of meat I am unable to say. Servants in my house would not eat it,—because, no doubt, they could get better. With such of the working classes as can afford themselves meat occasionally or in small quantities,—as to whom a saving in the cost of meat would be a matter of greatest consequence,—I could never find that it was in favour. As the preserved meats are without bone, they may, at the price above named, be regarded as being less than half the cost of first-class English meat. But I think that by most English workmen half a pound of English fresh meat would be regarded with more favour than the whole pound of Australian tinned meat. The tinned meats are cooked and only require to be reheated. That they may be sent in better condition in regard to flavour as experience is gained,—sent with less cooking, for at present they are always overcooked,—is probable. Whether they can be sent cheaper is more open to doubt.

But meat is not only preserved. There is another operation by which beef or mutton is converted into essence, and this trade seems to thrive well. The essence is sold at *5s.* a pound, and I was assured that it was sold as quickly as made. By means of this operation the traveller may carry an entire sheep, or all the nutritive part of his sheep, done up in a small parcel, in his coat pocket. On board ship, in hospitals, and for commissariat purposes, this essence,—which I presume owes its origin to Liebig,—is invaluable. For purposes of soup I declare it to be most excellent. I was once induced by a liberal manufacturer to put as much into my mouth as I could extract by thrusting my thumb into a can of it, and I felt as though I were pervaded by meatiness for many hours. I believe in the tallow. I believe in the essence. But I shall not believe in the cooked preserved meats, till growing science and increased experience shall have lessened the expense and raised the merit of the article.

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CHAPTER III.

GOLD.

FROM Rockhampton I returned to Maryborough by steamboat, and from thence made my way back to Brisbane by coach, in order that I might see Gympie, famous for its gold. I found Maryborough to be an active little town with a good deal of business in the way of meat-preserving, timber-sawing, and sugar-making. Of Queensland sugar-growing I shall say a few words before I have done with the colony, as also of the Islanders, Polynesians, or Canakers, who are now much employed in Queensland, and whose services are specially needed among the sugar canes. At present I will pursue my journey on to Gympie.

I had been very much advised against the coach. I was told that the road, and the vehicle, and the horses, and the driving were so rough as to be unfit for a man of my age and antecedents. One anxious friend implored me not to undertake it with an anxiety which could hardly have been stronger had I been his grandfather. I was, however, obstinate, and can now declare that I enjoyed the drive most thoroughly. It lasted three days, and took me through some magnificent scenery. Woodland country in Australia, —and it must be remembered that the lands occupied are mostly woodland,—is either bush or scrub. Woods which are open, and passable,—passable at any rate for men on horseback,—are called bush. When the undergrowth becomes thick and matted so as to be impregnable without an axe, it is scrub. In Queensland the scrubs are filled with tropical plants,—long vine tendrils, palms, and the

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parasite fig-tree,—and when a way has been cut through them the effect for a time is very lovely. The fault of all Australian scenery is its monotony. The eye after awhile becomes fatigued with a landscape which at first charmed with its park-like aspect. One never gets out of the trees, and then it rarely happens that water lends its aid to improve the view. As a rule it must be acknowledged that a land of forests is not a land of beauty. Some experience in travelling is needed before this can be acknowledged, as every lover of nature is an admirer of trees. But unceasing trees, trees which continue around you from six in the morning till six at night, become a bore, and the traveller begins to remember with regret the open charms of some cultivated plain. I had to acknowledge this monotony before I reached Brisbane;—but I acknowledged also the great beauty of the scrubs, and found some breaks in the mountains which were very grand.

Now for Gympie and its gold. Gympie in its early days was a great rush;—which means that when first the tidings were spread about through the colonies that gold was found at Gympie, the sudden flocking of miners to the place was very great. In those days, some ten years ago, when a new rush came out, the difficulty of supplying the men was excessive, and everything was consequently very dear. The rushes were made to spots in the middle of the forest, to which there were no roads, and to which carriage therefore was very difficult. In addition to this, men half intoxicated with the profusion of gold, which is both the cause and consequence of a new rush, are determined to have, not comforts, for they are unattainable, but luxuries which can be carried. A pair of sheets will be out of the question, but champagne may be had. In this way a singular mode of life seems to have established itself,—and the more singular in this, that the champagne element does not seem to have interfered with work. The miners when they are mining do not drink. Men drink at the gold-fields who are about to mine, or who have mined, or who are having a "spell," —what we would call a short holiday. But they do not drink at their work,—will frequently work from Monday to

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Saturday, drinking nothing but tea,—having a fixed and wholesome opinion that work and play should be kept separate. And it may be well to remark here that Australian miners are almost invariably courteous and civil. A drunken man is never agreeable; but even a drunken miner is rarely quarrelsome. They do not steal, and are rough rather than rowdy. It seemed to me that very little care was taken, or was necessary, in the preservation of gold, the men trusting each other with great freedom. There are quarrels about claims for land,—and a claim is sometimes unjustly "jumped." The jumping of a claim consists in taking possession of the land and works of absent miners, who are presumed by their absence to have deserted their claims. But such bickerings rarely lead to personal violence. The miners do not fight and knock each other about. They make constant appeals to the government officer,—the police magistrate, or, above him, to the gold commissioner of the district,—and they not unfrequently go to law. They do not punch each other's heads.

At the beginning of a rush the work consists, I think always, in alluvial washing. Some lucky man or set of men,—three or four together, probably,—"prospecting" about the country, come upon gold. This they are bound to declare to the government, and it is now thoroughly understood by miners that it is for their interest to declare it. The "prospecter" is then rewarded by being allowed to take up two or three men's ground, as the case may be. And every miner is allowed to take up a certain fixed share of ground on the sole condition that it has not already been taken up by any other miner, and that gold has been found in the neighbourhood. But the "prospecter" has the double advantage of choosing his ground where gold has certainly been found, and of having more ground than any of his neighbours. And this prospecting may go on from one side of a hill to another, or from one patch of ground to another. The original "prospecter" of Gympie had a large pecuniary reward besides his double claim; but at Gympie there have been many "prospecters," whose shafts, as a rule, are placed in the middle of others bearing the same name, belonging

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to men who have followed the prospecter. Thus there will be Smithfield "prospecting claim," and the Smithfield Number One, north, and Number Two and Three, north; and on the other side the Smithfield Numbers One, Two, and Three, south.

But before there were any shafts Gympie was great with surface-washing. The auriferous earth was dug up out of gullies, creeks, and holes, and was then washed out by cradles. The gold cradle has been so often described as to make it hardly worth the reader's while to have the description repeated to him. Puddling for gold I will attempt to explain when I come to the New South Wales gold-fields. At Gympie, when I was there, the search for gold had taken the phase of regular mining in rock reefs. Shafts are sunk to the necessary depth,—say, perhaps, two hundred feet,—and the auriferous rock or quartz is drawn up in buckets by whins or wheels worked by horses. This rock is taken to a quartz-crushing machine—which consists of fifteen or twenty stampers, which are worked by steam. The stone is thrown under the stampers, and is crushed by them almost to powder in a stream of water. The water carries the atoms through wire gauges on to a sloping bed, which is covered with flannel spread with quicksilver. And there are troughs filled with quicksilver across the beds. The quicksilver collects the gold, which is afterwards separated from it in a retort. So the gold is got out of a quartz-reef; but I have been assured that as much as twenty-five per cent. of the gold escapes with the refuse or is carried down by the water in the shape of minutely thin, floating gold-leaf. That there is gold in the refuse, or tailing as it is called, is known; but the reworking of it had not as yet been found to be a paying business when I was at Gympie.

An ounce of gold to a ton of raised quartz will, as a rule, pay very well. Of course this calculation cannot be taken to be applicable to all reefs, as the expense will be very various in different mines. At the New Zealand prospect shaft, down which I was taken, they were then getting six ounces of gold to the ton of stone,—so that the shareholders were prospering greatly. These mines or shafts are gene-

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rally held by small companies of perhaps four or five each. Very little capital is required for the commencement of the work;—just enough to put up a little woodwork, buy a horse or two, and keep the men going,—who are the shareholders themselves,—till they find gold or give up the claim as worthless. A miner while at this work will live on 12*s.* a week, and the shareholding miner will probably be in partnership with another man who is earning miner's wages at some other claim. These wages run from £2 10*s.* to £3 a week. The two men therefore will live out of the sum earned by the one, and have a residue to throw into the expenses of their joint speculation.

I was astonished at the small amount of machinery used in comparison with the largeness of the proceeds. Indeed there was none except that applied to the perfectly distinct operation of crushing. The crushing is done by a distinct company, and the charge made at Gympie when I was there was 12*s.* 6*d.* for a ton of quartz. The water is pumped up by horses, and not pumped by steam. The quartz is dragged up by horses. No company of miners crushes for itself. All seemed to be in a little way, although in some few instances the profits were very large. Different reasons for this were given; but the real reason was the precarious nature of the work, making it inexpedient for the miner to risk a large outlay on operations the productiveness of which may be brought to an end on any day. If it were not for this, the various little bands of men would no doubt club together, so as to acquire space for machinery,—for the claims as at present divided are not large enough to permit the erection of buildings for steam power;—and the heavy work of lifting and pumping could be done with a very great decrease of expense. But the gold found in any shaft may come to an end any day,—and then the money invested would be lost.

I have spoken of a happy family of miners,—of men who were getting six ounces of gold to every ton of quartz, and were realising, perhaps, £10 a day per man. They were a rough, civil, sober, hardworking lot,—four or five as I think, who were employing some four or five others, experienced miners, at £3 a week each. Among such a company it is

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impossible to recognise the social rank of each. There are what we call "gentlemen," and what we call "workmen." But they dress very much alike, work very much alike, and live very much alike. And, after awhile, they look very much alike. The ordinary miner who came perhaps from Cornwall or Northumberland, and whose father was a miner before him, gets a lift in the world,—as regards manners and habits as well as position. The "gentleman," even though in the matter of gold he be a lucky gentleman, gets a corresponding fall. He loses his gentility, his love of cleanliness, his ease of words, his grace of bearing, his preference for good company, and his social exigencies. There are some who will say that these things lost constitute a gain,—and that as long as the man is honest and diligent, earning his bread by high energy and running a chance of making a fortune, he is in every way doing better for himself than by thinking of his tub of cold water, his dress coat and trousers, his last new novel, and his next pretty girl. I cannot agree with these. Idle gentility doubtless is despicable. Idle, penniless, indebted gentility, gentility that will not work but is not ashamed to borrow, gentility that disports itself at clubs on the generosity of toiling fathers, widowed mothers, and good-natured uncles and aunts, is as low a phase of life as any that can be met. From that the rise to the position of a working miner is very great indeed. But gentility itself,—the combination of soft words, soft manners, and soft hands with manly bearing, and high courage, and intellectual pursuits,—is a possession in itself so valuable, and if once laid aside so difficult to be regained, that it should never be dropped without a struggle. I should be sorry to see a man I loved working in a gold-mine, sorry to see him successful in a gold-mine,—doubly sorry to see him unsuccessful, which has been the lot of by far the majority of enterprising gentlemen who have sought fortune on the Australian gold-fields.

I have spoken of a happy family,—but most of the mining families at Gympie were not so blessed. There were, perhaps, fifty or sixty reefing claims at Gympie, in which mining was actually in progress when I was there, but I did not hear

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of above ten in which gold was being found to give more than average wages, and I heard of many from which no gold was forthcoming. This claim had been abandoned,—that other was about worked out,—a third had been a mere flash in the pan,—at a fourth they had not got deep enough, and did not know that they ever would or could go deep enough, though they were still working hard with no returns; —at a fifth the gold would not pay the expenses. The stranger is of course taken to see the more successful ventures, and the thick streaks of gold which are shown him among the pet lumps of rock, kept by the miners in huge boxes instead of being thrown out among the unguarded heaps of quartz, produce a strange fascination. Where is the man who would not like to have a chest three times as big as a coffin full of such noble stones? But the traveller who desires to understand Gympie or any other digging, should endeavour to see the failures also. It is by no means every little wooden shanty near the mouth of a shaft that has such a box so filled. The unfortunate ones are not far to seek,—and they are very unfortunate though almost invariably brave. It seems to be an understood thing among Australian gold-diggers that a man is not to be querulous or downhearted in his plaints. They are free enough in speaking either of their good or bad fortune,—will own either to the one fact of £10 a day, or to the other that they have not earned a brass farthing for the last three weeks;—but they neither whine nor exult. They are gamblers who know how to bear the fortunes of the table.

Probably the class of miners which as a class does best is that of experienced men who work for wages. A good man, who has either come out from England as a miner, or has learned his trade in California or the colonies, can generally earn £2 10*s*. or £3 a week. For this he must work underground nine or ten hours a day. But he can live very cheaply,—for 12*s*. or 15*s*. a week,—and yet, as far as bread and meat and tea are concerned, can live plenteously. To such a man two or three hundred pounds is a fortune, and he may earn his fortune very quickly. In ten years' time a man intent upon his object, and able to resist tempta-

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tion, might return with £1,000. But unfortunately this is not the object on which they are intent, and they do not resist temptation. They all want to work for themselves, and generally, as I have said before, put their savings into other mines,—or rather live on their 12*s.* a week, in order that they may speculate with the money they save. The miner who works for himself and runs the hazard of the work is regarded as a higher being than he who contents himself with wages. Men will tell you that the real miner always "goes on his own hook." This feeling and the remote chance of great wealth stand in the way of that permanent success which the working miner might otherwise enjoy.

And probably the class of miners which as a class does worst is that composed of young gentlemen who go to the diggings, led away, as they fancy, by a spirit of adventure, but more generally, perhaps, by a dislike of homely work at home. An office-stool for six or eight hours a day is disagreeable to them, or the profession of the law requires too constant a strain, or they are sick of attending lectures, or they have neglected the hospitals;—and so they go away to the diggings. They soon become as dirty as genuine diggers, but they do not quickly learn anything but the dirt. They strive to work; but they cannot work alongside of experienced miners, and consequently they go to the wall. They are treated with no contempt, for all men at the diggings are free and equal. As there is no gentility, such men are not subject to any reproach or ill-usage on that score. The miner does not expect that any airs will be assumed, and takes it for granted that the young man will not sin in that direction. Our "gentleman," therefore, is kindly treated; but, nevertheless, he goes to the wall, and becomes little better than the servant, or mining hodsman, of some miner who knows his work. Perhaps he has a little money, and makes things equal with a partner in this way; but they will not long be equal,—for his money will go quicker than his experience will come. On one goldfield I found a young man whom I had known at home, who had been at school with my sons, and had frequented

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my house. I saw him in front of his little tent, which he occupied in partnership with an experienced working miner, eating a beefsteak out of his frying-pan with his clasp-knife. The occupation was not an alluring one, but it was the one happy moment of his day. He was occupied with his companion on a claim, and his work consisted in trundling a rough windlass, by which dirt was drawn up out of a hole. They had found no gold as yet, and did not seem to expect to find it. He had no friend near him but his mining friend,—or mate, as he called him. I could not but think what would happen to him if illness came, or if his mate should find him too far removed from mining capability. He had been softly nurtured, well educated, and was a handsome fellow to boot; and there he was eating a nauseous lump of beef out of a greasy frying-pan with his pocket-knife, just in front of the contiguous blankets stretched on the ground, which constituted the beds of himself and his companion. It may be that he will strike gold and make a fortune. I hope so with all my heart. But my strong and repeated advice to all young English gentlemen is to resort to any homely mode of earning their bread in preference to that of seeking gold in Australia.

I do not believe that gold-seeking in Australia has been remunerative to any class of men as a class. The gold found is sold to the mint or to the banks at prices varying from £3 10*s.* to £4 2*s.* the ounce. £3 15*s.* the ounce may perhaps be taken as an average price. I have been assured by those whose profession it has been to look into the matter that all the gold in Australia has been raised at an expense of not less than £5 the ounce. For myself, I can only say that I fully believe the statement. The calculation is one which cannot be made with such accuracy as to afford statistics in the matter. It is impossible to say at what price gold has been raised. If all the capital expended could be known, expended not only in work, but in bringing gold-seekers into the country,—still it would be impossible to estimate the value in wages of the time and work which have been consumed. This, however, is clear, that if a man could have earned £5 whilst he has been getting an

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ounce of gold to be sold for £3 15*s.*, he has raised that gold at £5 the ounce, and has thus lost £1 5*s.* by the venture. And if, as was the case in the early days of gold-digging, his living during his gold work cost him 10*s.* more than would have done his living at other employment, then he raised his gold at £5 10*s.* the ounce, and lost £1 15*s.* by the venture. All rates of wages and cost of living were so thrown out of gear throughout the colonies by the early gold rushes, that no exact calculation can be made. Shearers demanded and got £10 a hundred for shearing sheep, whereas the present price may be about 17*s.* 6*d.* a hundred. £1 a day was by no means extravagant wages for a groom. Everything for a while was on the same footing, because every man was taught to believe that he had only to rush to the gold-fields to pick up a fortune. But the men who picked up fortunes are very rare. One never meets them. But the men who just failed during this time to pick up fortunes one meets at every corner. "Ah," says one, "if I had gone away from such and such a rush when I had that £7,000." "I might have walked off with £12,000 after the first three months at Ballaarat," says a second. "I had £15,000 at one time out of Ophir," says a third. "Gympie was Gympie when I was rolling up £2,000 a month," says a fourth. Of course a question is asked as to what has become of these grand sums. The answer is always the same, though probably not always strictly true. The fortunes already made have been lost in pursuit of greater fortunes. It is not admitted that the money has been spent in useless, new-fangled luxuries; but that much has been so spent is certain. The Phœnix who has made his fortune at the diggings, and kept it, is a bird hardly to be found on Australian ground.

Gympie as a town was a marvellous place, and to my eyes very interesting, though at the same time very ugly. Its population was said to consist of about six thousand souls, but I found throughout the country that no statement of the population of a gold-field could be taken as accurate. The men go and come so quickly that the changes cannot be computed. It consists of a long street stretching more than

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a mile,—up and down hill,—without a single house in it that looked as though it had been built to last ten years. And probably no house had been built with any such ambition, although Gympie is now more than ten years old. The main street contains stores, banks, public-houses, a place of worship or two, and a few eating-houses. They are framed of wood, one storey high, generally built in the first place as sheds with a gable end to the street, on to which, for the sake of importance, a rickety wooden façade has been attached. The houses of the miners, which are seldom more than huts, are scattered over the surrounding little hills, here and there, as the convenience of the men in regard to the different mining places has prompted the builders. All around are to be seen the holes and shallow excavations made by the original diggers, and scattered among them the bigger heaps which have been made by the sinking of deep shafts. When a mine is being worked there is a rough wooden windlass over it, and at a short distance the circular track of the unfortunate horse who, by his rotatory motion, pulls the buckets up with the quartz, and lets them down with the miners. Throughout all there stands the stunted stumps of decapitated trees, giving the place a look of almost unearthly desolation. At a distance beyond the mine-shafts are to be seen the great forests which stretch away on every side over almost unlimited distance. If at any place one is tempted to quote the "aurum irrepertum et sic melius situm," it is at such a place as Gympie.

There is a hospital, and there are schools, which are well attended, and, as I have before said, various places of worship. I put up at an inn kept by a captain, which I found to be fairly comfortable, and by no means expensive. There were a crowd of men there, all more or less concerned in the search of gold, with whom I found myself to be quite intimate before the second night was over; and from whom, —as from everybody at Gympie,—I received much civility, and many invitations to drink brandy and water.

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CHAPTER IV.

SQUATTERS AND THEIR TROUBLES.

UNDOUBTEDLY the staple of Australian wealth is wool, and the growers and buyers and sellers of Australian wool are the chief men of the colonies. In Queensland, when I was there, six out of the seven ministers of the Crown were squatters, men owning runs for sheep or cattle. The cattle are reared chiefly for home consumption. The wool is all exported. As wool goes up or down in the London markets, so does the prosperity of Australia vacillate. Any panic in commercial matters of Europe which brings down the price of wool,—as panics have done most cruelly,—half ruins the colonies. Sheep sink in value from 10*s.* and 7*s.* 6*d.* a head to 4*s.* or 2*s.* Squatters' runs become valueless and unsaleable, and the smaller squatters, who are almost invariably in debt to the merchants, have to vanish. Then, when trade becomes steady again and wool rises, sheep again resume their former value, and the rich men who during the panic have taken up almost deserted sheep-walks become richer and richer.

The great drawback to the squatter's prosperity is to be found in the fact that a large proportion of them commence a great business with very insufficient capital. A man with £5,000 undertakes to pay £30,000 for a run, and finds himself enabled to enter in upon the possession of perhaps forty thousand sheep and the head station or house which has been built. To all outward appearance he is the owner. He manages everything. He employs and pays the various hands. He puts up fences and erects washpools. He buys

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and sells flocks. He makes great bales of wool, which he sends to Sydney, to Melbourne, or to London, as he pleases. Any rise in the price of wool is his good fortune, any fall is his calamity. But still he is little more than the manager for others. He has probably bought his run from a bank or from a merchant's house which has held a mortgage on it before, and the mortgage is continued. He has simply paid away the £5,000 to make the security of the mortgage commercially safe. At home when we speak of mortgaged property we allude as a rule to some real estate in land or houses. The squatter's real estate is generally very small,—and, as I shall explain presently, the smaller the better. The property mortgaged consists of the squatter's sheep,—and of his precarious right to feed his flocks on certain large tracts of land, which are the property of the public, and which are for the most part open to purchase. He is not therefore in reality left to himself in the management of his business, as would be a landowner in England who had mortgaged the land which he either farmed himself or let to a tenant. In such case the security of the mortgage would rest on the land, and the farmer would conduct his farming operations without let or hindrance. It is far otherwise with the squatter. The security he has given rests on his wool, and the price of his wool therefore must pass through the hands of the merchant to whom the debt is due. Nor can he lessen his stock of sheep without accounting to the merchant for the price of the sheep sold. The merchant is of course bound to see that the security on which his money has been advanced is not impaired. Consequently the whole produce of the run goes into the merchant's hands. When the wool is sent off,—say direct to London,—an estimated sum on account of its value is placed to the squatter's credit. When the wool has been sold the balance is also placed to his credit. But the money does not come into his hands. The same rule prevails very generally in regard to sheep sold. Consequently the squatter's produce all goes from him, and he is driven to draw upon the merchant for the money necessary to maintain his station, to pay his wages, and to live. It would appear at first sight as

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though the squatter could lose nothing by such an arrangement. As soon as the merchant receives the money for the wool, the squatter ceases to be charged with interest for so much. And when a sum is advanced to him, he again pays interest for so much,—according to the terms which may exist between him and the merchant. The rate of interest may be eight, nine, or ten per cent., according to the value of the original security. But in addition to this the merchant adds a commission of two and a half per cent. on every new advance,—so that the squatter in giving up his produce pays off a debt bearing say eight per cent. interest, and in drawing money to defray his expenses incurs fresh debt at say ten and a half per cent. interest. If things go well with him, he may no doubt free himself even at this rate. If he can sell his wool and sheep every year for £6,000, and carry on his station for £3,000, he will gradually,—but very slowly,—lessen his debt in spite of the interest which he pays. And he will live and the merchant will probably not disturb him. If everything should go well with him,—if his ewes be prolific, if diseases do not decimate his flock, if neither droughts nor floods oppress him, if wool maintain its price, if he cling to his work and be able to deny himself the recreation of long absences from his station, he may succeed in working himself free. But against a man so circumstanced the chances are very strong. Sheep are subject to diseases. Lambing is not always prosperous. Drought and floods do prevail in Australia. And the price of wool vacillates wonderfully,—very wonderfully to the eyes of a non-commercial man who observes that whatever happens in the world men still wear coats and trousers. And when these misfortunes come they fall altogether on the squatter who has begun by owning only one-sixth of the property, and not at all on the merchant who has owned the other five-sixths. At such periods,—when misfortune comes,—the squatter's debt begins to swell instead of dwindle. The produce will not pay for the expenses and the ever-running interest. The thousands down in the book begin to augment, and the merchant begins to see that he must secure himself. Then the station passes into other

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hands,—into the hands probably of some huge station-owner, who, having commenced life as a shepherd or a drover, has now stations of his own all over the colonies, and money to advance on all such properties,—and our friend with his £5,000 vanishes away, or becomes perhaps the manager with a fixed salary of the very sheep which he used to consider his own.

For a squatter of the true commercial kind not to owe money to his merchant or his banker is an unusual circumstance,—unless he be one who has stuck to his work till he is able to lend instead of borrow. The normal, and I may almost say the proper, condition of a squatter is indebtedness to some amount. The business of squatting would be very restricted, country life in Australia very different from what it is, the amount of wool produced for the benefit of the world wofully diminished, and the extension of enterprise over new lands altogether checked, if no capital were to be invested in the pursuit of squatting except that owned by the squatters themselves. No doubt this, the greatest interest of Australia, has been created and fostered by the combination of squatters and merchants. If the squatter commencing business can do so owing no more than half the value of his run he will probably do well, and in time pay off his debt. If the man with £5,000 will content himself with 12,000 sheep instead of 40,000, and will borrow another £5,000 instead of £25,000, he will find that there is something like a fair partnership between himself and the merchant, and that gradually his partner will be unnecessary to him. His partner, while the partnership lasts, will be getting at least ten per cent. for his money, but in such a condition of things the squatter will get twenty per cent. for his money. No doubt there will still be risks, from which the town partner will be comparatively free,—but unless there come heavy misfortunes indeed these risks will not break the squatter's back if his burden be no heavier than that above described.

The amount of debt in some stations is enormous, and the total interest paid, including bank charges, commission, and what not, frequently amounts to twenty per cent.

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When this state of things arises, the nominal squatter enjoys a certain security arising from the ambitious importance of his indebtedness,—due even to his own absolute insolvency. Were the merchant to sell him up and get rid of him, more than half the debt must be written off as absolutely bad. In such cases it may be better to maintain the squatter, on condition that he will work the station. The squatter is maintained,—and lives like other squatters a jolly life. The rate at which his house is kept will depend rather on the number of the sheep to be shorn than on his own income. He has no income, but the station is maintained, and among the expenses of the station are his wife's dresses and his own brandy and water.

I don't know that there can be a much happier life than that of a squatter, if the man be fairly prosperous, and have natural aptitudes for country occupations. He should be able to ride and to shoot,—and to sit in a buggy all day without inconvenience. He should be social,—for he must entertain often and be entertained by other squatters; but he must be indifferent to society, for he will live away from towns and be often alone with his family. He must be able to command men, and must do so in a frank and easy fashion,—not arrogating to himself any great superiority, but with full power to let those around him know that he is master. He must prefer plenty to luxury, and be content to have things about him a little rough. He must be able to brave troubles,—for a squatter has many troubles. Sheep will go amiss. Lambs will die. Shearers will sometimes drink. And the bullocks with the most needed supplies will not always arrive as soon as they are expected. And, above all things, the squatter should like mutton. In squatters' houses plenty always prevails, but that plenty often depends upon the sheep-fold. If a man have these gifts, and be young and energetic when he begins the work, he will not have chosen badly in becoming a squatter. The sense of ownership and mastery, the conviction that he is the head and chief of what is going on around; the absence of any necessity of asking leave or of submitting to others,—these things in themselves add a charm to life. The squatter

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owes obedience to none, and allegiance only to the merchant;—who asks no questions so long as the debt be reduced or not increased. He gets up when he pleases and goes to bed when he likes. Though he should not own an acre of the land around him, he may do what he pleases with all that he sees. He may put up fences and knock them down. He probably lives in the middle of a forest,—his life is always called life in the bush,—and he may cut down any tree that he fancies. He has always horses to ride, and a buggy to sit in, and birds to shoot at, and kangaroos to ride after. He goes where he likes, and nobody questions him. There is probably no one so big as himself within twenty miles of him, and he is proud with the conviction that he knows how to wash sheep better than any squatter in the colony. But the joy that mostly endears his life to him is the joy that he need not dress for dinner.

Queensland is divided into settled and unsettled districts, of which the settled districts include only a very small portion as compared with the immense area of the whole colony. It comprises the coast line running back in some places hardly more than twenty miles, and in others, in which the space is broadest, hardly more than two hundred. The laws in regard to the tenure of land within these so-called settled and unsettled districts is different,—the chief difference consisting in this, that half of every run within the settled districts is open to purchase by any selecters after the fashion described in a previous chapter. In the unsettled districts no such privilege was granted by the law of 1868, because no such privilege would have been of use. No intending agriculturist, purposing to fix his family and to live on a portion of land for which money must be paid, would dream for some years to come of fixing his abode and sowing his seed beyond the line as marked by government. Nor would the survey of such lands have availed anything. There the squatters reign supreme,—more supremely even than the squatter nearer to civilisation. But the very distance of his station makes his existence less important to the colony than that of his nearer brother. His enterprise is not so great, though his

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courage and perseverance may be quite equal. The Darling Downs are within the line of the settled districts, and beyond them I did not go.

It must be understood, therefore, that the run of the Darling Downs squatter is open to sale, and that he has been terribly injured in his otherwise prosperous career by the law of 1868, which devoted half of his run to free-selection. But the free-selecter who has most injured the Darling Downs squatter is the squatter himself, and for this reason I said that the less land the squatter owned himself, the better. The land selected on the Darling Downs district greatly exceeds in area that purchased in any other, but the squatters have themselves made the selections. They have thought themselves compelled to become purchasers of land on their own runs to the full extent given them by the law,—not because they wanted to possess the land in fee, but in order that others might not come near them and disturb them. Anything to them was better than a free-selecting cattle-stealer at their gates. They have, therefore, purchased land by tens of thousands of acres. In this way a vast extent of country has fallen into the hands of the squatters, so as to become veritably their own, if the due instalments are paid to the Crown as they become due. If a squatting firm,—for the large stations are generally held by firms, or by two or three of a family together,—should have thus purchased, say 40,000 acres of even the lower class of pastoral land,—land to be purchased within ten years at 6*d.* an acre in each year,—£1,000 a year would have to be paid to the Crown for those ten years. But this payment would in no degree increase the squatter's means. He would enjoy no power of producing wealth from the land which was not his to the same extent before. His sheep would still run there as his sheep have hitherto run. But the squatter in but few cases was prepared to make these payments out of his own pocket. He was in partnership with the merchant, and the merchant would make the payment. But the matter was of no great concern to the merchant himself. He was not to be even part purchaser. He pays the money annually, but charges the account with

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his eight, ten, or twelve per cent. according to his agreement, and so the squatter's debt is increased from year to year without any increase to the squatter's means. It may be imagined, therefore, how odious must be the free-selecter to the squatter, although of all free-selecters he is himself by far the most extensive.

I had heard much of all this before I went to the Darling Downs, and I was prepared to hear the question discussed. I cannot but think that it would have been better to welcome the free-selecter,—to have let him come and select if he would,—and to have endured him. In 1878, even if no new law should do so before, the half of each run not now open to selection will be in the same category, and the same play must be played again. The more I have seen on the subject, and the more I have heard, the more certain I feel that pastoral pursuits in Queensland will not bear the expense of purchased land. The very system of squatting is based on the idea that the land shall be free,—free with the exception of some annual fee paid to the Crown for license to pasture. The buying up of lands for agricultural purposes has progressed, and must progress slowly, and the squatters feel secure in the fact that large purchases could not be remunerative to anybody. No free-selecter, selecting for the purpose of living on the agricultural produce of his land, could buy any great number of acres. Gradually, but very slowly, men of this class would spread themselves over the settled districts,—and it was the wise intention of the colonial legislature that they should be encouraged to do so. Gradually, but very slowly, the squatter would be driven back from the neighbourhood of rising townships into the vast pastoral areas further back from the coast line. But these men, the aristocracy of the country, were impatient of such treatment, and too proud to endure such neighbours; and therefore they have bought the land themselves. They argue that, as the climate is unsuitable for agricultural pursuits,—as wheat cannot be made to grow in these regions with any permanent success,—the free-selecting farmer cannot live on his farm by honest labour, and that he will therefore live dishonestly.

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The squatter declares that the normal free-selecter makes his small purchase in order that he may be enabled to steal cattle with impunity, and live after that fashion. He will make any effort,—almost any sacrifice,—to keep the normal free-selecter from his paddocks.

Undoubtedly, the crime of cattle-stealing,—of cattle-stealing and sheep-stealing and horse-stealing,—is one of the greatest curses of the Australian colonies. The pastures are so extensive, and therefore so little capable of being easily watched, that the thefts can always be made without difficulty. Every animal is branded, and the brands are all registered. One never sees even an unbranded horse in Australia, unless it be a wild animal in the woods. But the brands are altered, or else the carcasses are carried away while the skins are left. And there is undoubtedly a feeling in the pastoral districts of Australia, among the class of men who labour on the land, that the squatter is fair game for such depredations. We all know the difficulty which is felt in Ireland as to getting evidence against the perpetrators of agrarian violence. There is the same difficulty in these colonies with reference to the cattle-stealer. He has with him much of the sympathy of all men of his own class,—and there are many who do not dare to give evidence against him. The law is severe, but it is too often inoperative.

Very much that the squatter alleges against the free-selecter is true. In arguing the question, as I have done with many a squatter, I always took the part of the free-selecter, expressing a strong opinion that he was the very man whom the colony should be most anxious to encourage, and urging that if here and there a free-selecter should become a thief, the law should be made to deal with him;—but not the least did I feel that the gentleman with whom I might be conversing knew very well where his own shoe pinched him. A peculiar crime has grown up in Australia,—and is attended by one of the worst circumstances which can accompany crime. It has assumed a quasi-respectability among the class of men who are tempted to commit it. It is like smuggling, or illicit distillation, or sedition, or the

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seduction of women. There is little or no shame attached to it among those with whom the cattle-stealers live. It is regarded as fair war by the small agriculturist against the ascendant squatter. A man may be a cattle-dealer, and yet in his way a decent fellow. I was once standing by, over a kangaroo which we had hunted, and which a free-selecter who had made one in the hunt was skinning. There were two or three others also by. The man was a good sportsman, but I had been told that he liked other people's meat. "You have heard of the cattle-stealers, sir," he said, looking up at me, "This is the way they do it by moonlight, I'm told." He skinned the kangaroo with great skill and quickness, and I was sure that he was no novice at the business. He knew well enough that by what he did and what he said he was owning himself to have been a cattle-stealer, but he was not a bit ashamed of it.

Nevertheless, I think the free-selecter should be welcomed as a farmer,—although it may often be necessary to punish him, or even but to try to punish him as a cattle-stealer. The more general he becomes, the less necessary will it be for the squatters to depend for their work on the nomad tribe of wandering men which infest the pastoral districts. The squatter's work is of such a nature that he requires very few hands during, perhaps, eight or nine months of the year, and a great many during the other three or four. From the commencement of the washing of his sheep to the packing of the last bale of wool, all is hurry, scurry, and eager business on the station. During those three or four months men are earning from him very high wages, and it is indispensable to him that he should have a large amount of skilled labour. Through the other eight or nine months, these men vanish from the station, and have to live elsewhere, either on their savings or on other labour,—or by a species of beggary which is common in the colonies and the weight of which falls altogether on the squatters. Now the free-selecter, who is also a shearer, has a home to go to, and other pursuits of his own. This temporary work suits his needs, and enables him to live on his bit of land without stealing cattle. And then the free-selecter will come

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whether he be welcomed or not. As he is a necessity, it must surely be wise to make the best of him.

The nomad tribe of pastoral labourers,—of men who profess to be shepherds, boundary-riders, sheep-washers, shearers, and the like,—form altogether one of the strangest institutions ever known in a land, and one which to my eyes is more degrading and more injurious even than that other institution of sheep-stealing. It is common to all the Australian colonies, and has arisen from the general feeling of hospitality which is always engendered in a new country by the lack of sufficient accommodation for travellers. In the pastoral districts it is understood that when hospitality is demanded from a squatter it shall be given. At small stations there are two classes of welcome. The labouring man, with his "swag" over his back,—the "swag" being his luggage, comprising probably all the property he has in the world,—is sent to the "hut." There is a hut at every station, fitted up with bunks, in which the workmen sleep. Here the wanderer is allowed to stretch his blanket for the night,—and on all such occasions two meals are allowed to him. He has meat and flour in the morning, and meat and flour in the evening. Then he passes on his way. If the traveller be of another description,—a squatter himself, an overseer journeying from one station to another, a man who on any pretence claims to be akin to gentlehood,—he is taken into the squatter's house, and sits at the squatter's table, and has tea as well as bread and meat,—and brandy and water, if brandy and water be the family beverage. On large stations, at which the overseer has a separate residence, travellers of this superior class are relegated to his house, and the great squatter hears nothing about it,—except that he defrays the cost of the entertainment. In this way a wide hospitality is exercised, which has become proverbial; which, when thus described, has an Arcadian charm about it which is quite refreshing to the imagination;—but which has led to a terrible evil under which the squatter groans with all but acknowledged impotence.

This evil concerns only the first-named class of wanderer. I have heard no squatter complain of the burden of entertaining men who are travelling from one part of the colonies

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to another on legitimate business. A certain allowance is made for the expense, and the practice is recognised as being convenient to all parties. But it has come to be very far from convenient as regards the so-called workman with his "swag." By many men it has been found to be a way of living which enables them to spend in rapid debauch the money earned by the labour of a few months, and to exist in idleness during the remainder of the year. By many others it has been adopted as the practice of the entire twelvemonth. The expense thus entailed upon stations has become incredibly great. One gentleman told me that such men cost him £300 a year. I heard of a squatter's establishment in Victoria at which £1,000 a year was expended in this involuntary entertainment of vagabond strangers. And the evil by no means ends here. A mode of life is afforded to recusant labourers which enables men to refuse work at fair terms, and to rebel against their masters when their work or their wages are not to their liking. They know that the squatters of the colonies do not dare to refuse them food and shelter.

Such men, when they appear, generally ask for work. They not unfrequently come on horseback, and always bring their luggage,—a blanket, a tin pot, and some small personalties wrapped up in the blanket. The squatter, or more probably the overseer, knows very well from the man's aspect that he does not mean to work. Sometimes he is asked to chop wood before he has his supper, but as a rule it is understood that such demand will not be efficacious for any good purpose. It is better to let him have his lump of meat and his flour, with use of a bunk,—and then pass on to the next squatter. But the lump of meat, and the flour, and the use of the bunk he must have.

But why must he have them? The overseer could refuse the accustomed liberality, and the man with some growling would pass on and "camp out" with an empty stomach under some log. Or why, at any rate, should not the food be refused till it have been first earned by sufficient work? "There be the logs, my friend. Reduce them to convenient firewood,—as may be done by three hours' work,—and you shall be fed. Dark is it? Then you should come

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earlier and earn your victuals. But victuals without earning you shall not have." The squatter who did so would be at once known; his sheep would be slaughtered; his fences would be burned; and his horses would be houghed. The vagabond wayfarers are too numerous and too strong, and are able to obtain by terrorism that which hospitality no longer bestows. A squatter with his fences burned would be a ruined man.

The social injury which I have endeavoured to describe is worse even to the pastoral labourer himself than to the squatter. The squatter can live and bear it,—though the burden is grievous to him. Meat is cheap,—and if the station be small the calls on him are comparatively few. But the men themselves who practise this life are reduced almost to savagery. They become at last no better than the blacks. They wander about in desolate solitude, idle, worthless, and wretched. The idleness has been the charm; —but we all know how infinite is the misery which that charm produces.

I have attempted to describe some of the great troubles under which squatters labour,—namely debt, free-selecters, and vagabonds. But they have also many others. Drought, floods, foot-rot among their flocks, wild dogs,—or dingoes,— which prey upon their lambs and flurry their sheep, grass-seed which injures the wool, and works its way through the skins of the lambs, utterly destroying the poor little bleaters, grass that is overgrown and rank, grass that won't grow, poisonous grass, too much grass, no grass,—and then that worst of all miseries, panic in the wool trade. But these are not social in their nature, and I will not venture to give any opinion of the best way of meeting them. As to the debt,—I am clear on this point, that a moderate station with a moderate debt, is better than a big station with a big debt. As to the free-selecter,—I believe it will be the wisest course to welcome him and make the best of him. As to the vagabond labourer who won't labour, I do not doubt that all squatters will agree with me in saying that he should be abolished altogether.

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CHAPTER V.

DARLING DOWNS.

When I was in Brisbane in the beginning of August I was told by one of the great squatters of the district which I intended to visit that if I would come up about the second week in September I should see the Downs in all their glory,—vast expanses of verdant plain, waving with grass, and greener than fields in England in the month of May. In regard to date I obeyed my friend to the letter, leaving Brisbane on the 4th of September, and returning to it on the 21st. But, alas, my friend had made his promise without remembering how fickle on such occasions are the winds which bring, or the winds which withhold, rain from the Australian plains. Rain was due, and my friend had counted on genial showers. But not a drop had fallen. When I was in the neighbourhood of Rockhampton, sheep and cattle were dying from want of water and want of grass. I was told then that not a drop had fallen for six months. Not a drop had fallen when I started to the Downs, and not a drop had fallen when I left them. I saw the plains, but I saw them either black with fire,—for it is the custom there to burn off the old dry withered grass which the sheep will not eat, in order that the young shoots may have room to spring,—either black with fire or brown with droughts. The roots stood apart, stiff, rough, and unappetizing to any sheep,—showing the bare black soil between the intervals, showing here and there broad fissures, thirsty, gaping, and ugly. It seemed to me to be a miracle that any sheep could live so pastured. The name of "Darling Downs" is given

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to this district because it differs from the great majority of the area occupied by Australian squatters in this,—that the land is open instead of being covered by wood. It consists of vast level plains more like the prairies of Illinois than any other region I have seen,—though very much less in extent than the prairies. Even on the Darling Downs one gets almost beyond the sight of trees; whereas the squatter generally lives "in the bush," as the phrase goes, and pastures his sheep among thick woodlands.

I went by coach to the town of Ipswich, and stayed there a day, seeing with due diligence all the institutions of the place. There was a handsome school for the sons of men of the better class, towards the expense of which £1,000 per annum is defrayed from the general taxes of the country. Then there was the post-office, and a public room for purposes of amusement and instruction which did not seem to be much used, two or three mercantile establishments, and the usual assortment of rectangular streets which no doubt is convenient, but which seems to forbid any new town to be picturesque. But the great glory of Ipswich is the fact that it returns three members to parliament. It has a population of about five thousand persons. Rockhampton with about the same number returns one member. This appeared to be another argument for separation. But I was assured that as Brisbane had four members,—or in reality five, for its suburb of Fortitude Valley returns a member,—it was indispensable that Ipswich should have at least three. The two favoured towns, with a joint population of eighteen thousand, return exactly a quarter of the members sent to parliament by the entire colony, with a population of one hundred and twenty thousand. This also seemed to tend the same way.

From Ipswich I rode across Cunningham Gap, through the range of hills which runs down the whole eastern coast of Australia, dividing the narrow eastern strip of the continent from the wide plains of the interior, staying a night at a station on each foot of the mountains. I am inclined to think that this was the prettiest scenery that I saw in Queensland. The two houses were beautifully situated, and

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the ride between them was magnificent. In going over the Gap itself we were obliged to dismount and climb; but the climbing was by no means Alpine in its nature,—as will be understood when I say that we drove our horses before us. Any one who may visit Queensland as a tourist should certainly pass through Cunningham Gap.

I was hardly yet upon the Downs, and at these stations under the mountains did not find things all black and brown as I did when I reached the plains, but even here there was a cry for rain, and a feeling that unless rain came soon squatting affairs would begin to "look blue."

Thence I went to the little town of Warwick, which in that part of the world is held to be the perfection of a town. "You will think Warwick very pretty," everybody said to me. I did not think Warwick at all pretty. It is unfinished, parallelogrammic, and monotonous; and the mountains are just too far from it to give it any attraction,—as is also the sluggish Condamine River. It is not so rugged as are many of the towns. And, though here as in other colonial towns the houses are intermittent and every other lot apparently vacant, there has been an eye to decency. But when I am told that such a place is pretty, I do not know what the speaker means. That it should be clean is creditable; that it should be progressive is satisfactory;—but that it should be ugly is a necessity of its condition. I found Warwick to be clean, and I believe it to be prosperous;—and, which was very much to my purpose, I found in it an excellent inn, kept by one Bugden. And I found there Chang, the great Chinese giant, about to show himself at 2*s.* a head on the evening of my arrival. But I had not come from London to Warwick to see Chang, and I neglected an opportunity which, perhaps, may never occur to me again.

From Warwick I got by railway to the first of the great Darling Down stations, which I visited, and from thence went on across country from one to another till I had visited some six or seven of those which are the largest and the most renowned. It is not my purpose to give any description of each, as I could hardly do so without personal references, which are always distasteful when hospitality has been

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given and taken. To say that Mr. Smith's house is well-built or his wife agreeable is almost as great a sin as to declare that Mr. Jones's wine was bad or his daughter ugly. At all these houses I found a plentiful easy life, full of material comfort, informal, abundant, careless, and most unlike life in England. There were two great faults, namely these,—that a man was expected to eat two dinners every day, and that no credence could be given when any hour was named for any future event. Breakfast at eight would simply mean to the stranger, after some short experience, that the meal would be ready some time after nine. A start promised for ten is thought to be made very punctually if effected at eleven. As regards the evening meal, the second dinner, there is no pretence of any solicitude as to time. There is nothing to be done after it, and therefore what can it matter? This second dinner differs from the first only in this,—that there is always tea on the table. There is often tea also in the middle of the day. But the generous liver need on that account have no fear at all that he will be debarred from other beverages. In the squatter's house there is always brandy and water within reach, and the tea-pot, after breakfast, is generally flanked by the decanter. The products of the colonies are always dear to the colonial mind, and sometimes praise is expected for colonial wine which a prejudiced old Englishman feels that he can hardly give. I have also been frowned upon by bright eyes because I could not eat stewed wallabi. Now the wallabi is a little kangaroo, and to my taste is not nice to eat even when stewed to the utmost with wine and spices.

It was a very pleasant life that I led at these stations. I like tobacco and brandy and water, with an easy-chair out on a verandah, and my slippers on my feet. And I like men who are energetic and stand up for themselves and their own properties. I like having horses to ride and kangaroos to hunt, and sheep became quite a fascination to me as a subject of conversation. And I liked that roaming from one house to another,—with a perfect conviction that five minutes would make me intimate with the next batch of strangers. Men in these Colonies are never ashamed of their poverty;

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nor are they often proud of their wealth. In all country life in Australia there is an absence of any ostentation or striving after effect,—which is delightful. Such as their life is, the squatters share it with you, giving you, as is fitting for a stranger, the best they have to give. Upon the Darling Downs the stations are large and the accommodation plentiful; but I have been on many sheep-runs which were not so well found,—at which bedrooms were scarce, and things altogether were less well arranged. But there is never any shame as to the inferiority, never any pretence at superiority. What there is, is at your service. If there be not a whole bedroom for you, there is half a bedroom. If there be not wine, there is brandy or rum;—if no other meat, there is at least mutton. If the house be full, some young man can turn out and go to the barracks, or sleep on the verandah. If all the young men have been turned out the old men can follow them. It is a rule of life on a sheep-run that the station is never so full that another guest need be turned away.

These houses,—stations as they are called,—are built after a very simple and appropriate fashion. There is not often any upper storey. Every room is on the ground floor. There is always a verandah, running the length of the house, and not unfrequently continued round the ends. The rooms all open out upon the verandah, and generally have no communication with each other. The kitchen is invariably a separate building, usually attached to the house by a covered way. When first building his residence the squatter probably has had need for but small accommodation, and has constructed his house with perhaps three rooms. Children have come, and guests, and increased demands, and increased house-room has been wanted. Another little house has therefore been joined on to the first, and then perhaps a third added. I have seen an establishment consisting of seven such little houses. Many hours are passed in the verandah, in which old people sit in easy-chairs and young men lie about, seeming to find the boards soft enough for luxurious ease. Attached to the station there is always a second home called the barracks, or the cottage, in

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which the young men have their rooms. There are frequently one or two such young men attached to a sheep-station, either learning their business or earning salaries as superintendents. According to the terms of intimacy existing, or to the arrangements made, these men live with the squatter's family or have a separate table of their own. They live a life of plenty, freedom, and hard work, but one which is not surrounded by the comforts which young men require at home. Two or three share the same room, and the washing apparatus is chiefly supplied by the neighbouring creek. Tubs are scarce among them, but bathing is almost a rule of life. They are up and generally on horseback by daylight, and spend their time in riding about after sheep. The general idyllic idea of Arcadian shepherd-life, which teaches us to believe that Tityrus lies under a beech-tree most of his hours, playing on his reed and "spooning" Phyllis, is very unlike the truth in Australian pastures. Corin is nearer the mark when he tells Touchstone of his greasy hands. It is a life, even for the upper shepherd of gentle birth and sufficient means, of unremitting labour amidst dust and grease, amidst fleeces and carcasses. The working squatter, or the squatter's working assistant, must be a man capable of ignoring the delicacies of a soft way of living. He must endure clouds of dust, and be not averse to touch tar and oil, wool and skins. He should be able to catch a sheep and handle him almost as a nurse does a baby. He should learn to kill a sheep, and wash a sheep, and shear a sheep. He should tell a sheep's age by his mouth,—almost by his look. He should know his breeding, and the quality of his wool. He should be able to muster sheep,—collect them in together from the vast pastures on which they feed, and above all he should be able to count them. He must be handy with horses,—doing anything which has to be done for himself. He must catch his own horse,—for the horses live on grass, turned out in paddocks,—and saddle him. The animal probably is never shod, never groomed, and is ignorant of corn. And the young man must be able to sit his horse,—which perhaps is more than most young men could do in England,—for it may be

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that the sportive beast will buck with the young man, jumping up into the air with his head between his legs, giving his rider as he does so such a blow by the contraction of his loins as will make any but an Australian young man sore all over for a week, even if he be not made sore for a much longer time by being sent far over the brute's head. This young man on a station must have many accomplishments, much knowledge, great capability; and in return for these things he gets his rations, and perhaps £100 per annum, perhaps £50, and perhaps nothing. But he lives a free, pleasant life in the open air. He has the scolding of many men, which is always pleasant; and nobody scolds him, which is pleasanter. He has plenty and no care about it. He is never driven to calculate whether he can afford himself a dinner,—as is often done by many young men at home who have dress coats to wear and polished leather boots for happy occasions. He has always a horse to ride, or two or three, if he needs them. His salary is small, but he has nothing to buy,—except moleskin trousers and flannel shirts. He lives in the open air, has a good digestion, and sleeps the sleep of the just. After a time he probably works himself up into some partnership,—and has always before him the hope that the day will come in which he too will be a master squatter.

A sheep has to be born, and washed, and shorn,—the three great operations of a squatter's life consisting in the lambing, washing, and shearing of his flocks. On the Darling Downs in Queensland the lambs are dropped in August and September. Washing commences in September, and the shearing is over not much before Christmas. I was astonished to find that the practice in regard to washing and shearing varied very much at different stations, and that very strong opinions were held by the advocates of this or that system;—so that the science of getting wool off the sheep's back in the best condition must be regarded as being even yet in its infancy. Many declare that sheep should not be washed at all, and that the wool should be shorn "in the grease." My opinion will not, I fear, be valued much by the great Queensland squatters, but, such

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as it is, it goes with the non-washers. Presuming that my own outside garniture required to be cleansed, I should not like to have it done on my back;—and if I knew that it was to be taken off immediately after the operation, I should think that to be an additional reason for deferring the washing process. There are various modes of washing,—but on the stations which I saw on the Darling Downs the sheep were all "spouted." I will endeavour to explain to the ordinary non-pastoral reader this system of spouting, premising that perhaps some 200,000 sheep have to undergo the process on one station, and at the same set of spouts.

But before we get to the spouting there is a preliminary washing to be undergone, and as to that also there are fierce contests. Shall this preliminary washing be performed with warm or with cold water? And then again there is, so to say, an anti-preliminary washing in vogue, which some call "raining." If I remember rightly sheep were "rained on" in Queensland only at those stations in which warm water was in demand. The sheep by thirties and forties were driven into long narrow pens, over which pipes were supported, pierced with holes from end to end. Into these pipes water is forced by a steam-engine, and pours itself right and left, in the guise of rain, over the sheep below. In this way the wool is gently saturated with moisture, and then the sheep are driven out of the pens into long open tanks filled with water, just lukewarm. Here they are soaked for a few minutes,—and this practice is matter for fierce debate among squatters. I have heard a squatter declare with vehement gesture that he hoped every squatter would be ruined who was mad enough to use warm water at his washpool. I have heard others declare with equal vehemence that no wool could be really clean which had not been subjected to the process. For myself, I am dead against washing altogether; but if sheep are to be washed then I am dead against warm water. The sheep becomes cold after it and chill during the three or four days necessary for drying, and in that condition of the animal the yolk which is necessary to the excellence of the wool does not rise, and the fleece when taken off, though cleaner than it

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would otherwise have been, is less rich in its quality and less strong in its fibre.

But whether out of tanks with warm water or tanks with cold water, the sheep are passed on, one by one, into the hands of the men at the spouts. At one washpool I saw fourteen spouts at work, with two men at each spout. These twenty-eight men are quite amphibious for the time, standing up to their middles in a race of running water. But this race is not a natural stream. High over their heads are huge iron cisterns which are continually filled by a steam pump, and which empty themselves by spouts from the bottom, through which the water comes with great force,—a force which can of course be moderated by the weight of water thrown in. The water is kept at a certain height according to the force wanted, and falls with the required weight, in obedience to the law of gravitation, on a board between the two rough water-spirits below. Now the tanks, of which I have spoken, are high above the water-spirits, and the sheep are brought out from them on to a small intermediate pen or platform, from which they are dropped one by one down a steep inclined trap,—each sheep by a separate trap,—into the very hands of the washers. The fall may be about twelve or fifteen feet. Then the animal undergoes the real work of washing,—the bad quarter of an hour of his life. He is turned backwards and forwards under the spout with great violence,—for great violence is necessary,—till the fury of the water shall have driven the dirt from his fleece. The bad quarter of an hour lasts, at some washpools, half a minute,—at others as long as a minute and a half; and I think I am justified in saying that the sheep does not like it. He goes out of the spouter's hands, not into the water, but on to steep boards, arranged so as to give him every facility for travelling up to the pen which is to receive him. But I have seen sheep so weak with what they have endured as to be unable to raise themselves on to their feet. Indeed at some washpools such was the normal condition of the sheep when they came from the spouts. It is impossible that there should not be rough handling. That, and the weight of the water

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together, prostrates them. This is so much the case that no squatter dares to wash his rams,—the pride of his flock,—for fear of injuring them. But, as a rule, sheep are washed in Queensland, and this is the fashion of their washing.

In Queensland the washpool, as at present arranged, is the squatter's great hobby, and next to it his wool-shed. They are generally at some distance from each other,—perhaps seven or eight miles,—for the sheep must have time to dry, and it is well that they should travel a little over the pastures, feeding as they go, as being less likely to become again dirty with their own dust, as they would do if they were left together in large numbers. They are mustered and kept apart with infinite care, as ewes with their lambs must not be shorn with hoggetts, or hoggetts with old wethers. And there are sheep of different breeding and various qualities of wool which must not be mixed. In different flocks the sheep make their way from the washpool to the wool-shed, and then are shorn on about the fourth day. It is essentially necessary that they should be dry, so that rain during the double process is very detrimental to the squatter.

The wool-shed is a large building open on every side, with a high-pitched roof,—all made of wood and very rough. The sheep are driven in either at one end or both, or at three sides, according to the size of the station and the number of sheep to be shorn. They are then assorted into pens, from which the shearers take them on to the board;—two, three, or four shearers selecting their sheep from each pen. The floor, on which the shearers absolutely work, is called "the board." I have seen as few as four or five shearing together, and I have seen as many as seventy-six. I have watched a shearer take the wool off his sheep in five minutes, and I have seen a man occupied nearly fifteen in the same operation. As they are paid by the score or by the hundred, and not by the day, the great object is to shear as many as possible. I have known a man to shear ninety-five in a day. I have heard of a man shearing one hundred and twenty. From sixty to seventy may be taken as a fair day's work. But as rapidity of work is so greatly to her

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workman's interest, and as too rapid a hand either leaves the wool on the sheep's back or else cuts skin and fleece together, there is often a diversity of opinion between the squatter and the shearer. "Shear as quick as you can," says the squatter, who is very anxious to get his work out of hand;—"but let me have all my wool,—and let it not be cut mincemeat-fashion, but with its full length of staple;—and above all do not mutilate and mangle my poor sheep." But the poor sheep are mutilated and mangled by many a sore wound, and from side to side about the shed the visitor hears the sound of "Tar." When a sheep has been wounded the shearer calls for tar, and a boy with a tar-pot rushes up and daubs the gory wound. Each shearer has an outside pen of his own to which the sheep when shorn is demitted, and so the tally is kept.

The shearer does nothing but shear. When one sheep has left his hand he seizes at once another, being very careful to select that which will be easiest shorn. The fleece, when once separated from the animal's back, is no longer a care to him. Some subordinate picks it up and makes away with it, when folded, to the sorter's table. The sorter is a man of mark, and should be a man of skill, who gives himself airs and looks grand. It is his business to allot the wool to its proper sphere,—combing or clothing, first combing or second combing, first clothing or second clothing, broken wool, greasy, ram's-wool, hoggett's-wool, lamb's-wool, and the like. He stands immovable, and does his work with a touch, while ministers surround him, unfolding and folding, and carrying the assorted fleeces to their proper bins. But I am told that in England very little is thought of this primary sorting, and that all wools are re-sorted as they are scoured. The squatter, however, says that unless he sorted his wool in his own shed he could not realise a good price for a good article.

Then when the wool is sorted it is pressed. Every wool-shed has its press, in which the bales are made into the shape that is familiar to the English eye. The average bale contains about 400 lb., and these are sent away on bullock-drags,—waggons with ten, twelve, or fourteen

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bullocks, down over bush roads, hundreds of miles, to the seaport at which they are shipped. It is a moot question whether the squatter should sell in the colony or in London. If prices be low, he had better probably send his produce home. If they be high, he had better take the ball at the hop, and realise his money in the colony.

I have said something before of the men employed at these stations. The ordinary hands,—those kept during the whole year,—are not many, and of them I may speak again in what words I shall have to say on the smaller stations in New South Wales. But the great work of the year on a large run with 200,000 sheep, or perhaps even a larger number,—the work of washing and shearing,—demands a crowd of workmen. I found considerably above a hundred employed by one master. That which strikes an Englishman most forcibly with regard to these men is, that the squatter is called upon to feed them all. Rations are given out for them in certain measured quantities. These rations vary somewhat, but in Queensland they were generally as follows. For each man per week :—

Meat	14 lb.
Flour	8 lb.
Sugar	2 lb.
Tea	¼ lb.

For the ordinary work of the year the squatter gives the rations as part of the allotted wages. Shearers, however, are charged for all that is furnished to them. The squatters provide everything that the men require,—except drink, of which it is expected that there shall be literally none used while the shearing is in progress. The squatter keeps in his store tobacco, currants, pickles, jam, boots, shirts, moleskin trousers, shears, coffee,—and various condiments. These are supplied to the men at prices fixed by the squatter,—and so fixed as generally to leave some little profit. Were it not so, there would be a certain loss. But under this system the squatter becomes a shopkeeper, with a monopoly of supply to certain persons,—and no doubt unfairly high prices may sometimes be charged.

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For shearing on the Darling Downs the usual rate is 3*s.* 4*d.* a score. If a man shear seventy sheep, which is no extraordinary number, he will earn 11*s.* 8*d.* a day. But it may be that the shearing will be stopped by wet weather, and then he must remain idle. He is bound by a contract, very strongly worded in the employer's favour, to remain till the shearing be done;—and is very much at the mercy of the squatter. He can be dismissed at a word if the squatter or his superintendent disapprove of his style of shearing, and is subject to certain fines. Rules are fixed up on the shed which he must obey,—and if he rebel, he is sent at once from the shed. I have told in a previous chapter how one poor man revenged himself by means of his poetical genius. It is not often, however, that differences arise. The squatter is very anxious to have his sheep shorn, and remembers the old proverb which tells him that the —— he knows is better than the —— he don't know. I was surprised to find what bad shearing was endured,—bad shearing induced not by want of skill or idleness, but by the rapidity which task-work is sure to produce. The sheep were cut horribly,—as I thought;—and but little was said.

The shearers find their own cook, and pay him 2*s.* 6*d.* a week each. So that, with fifty, sixty, or seventy shearers, the cook would seem to have a good place. But with such a number there must be assistant cooks,—found by the master cook; and the men are both particular and impatient. They want hot coffee very early, hot meat for breakfast, messes with vegetables for dinner, hot meat for supper;—and are imperative as to hot plum-buns with their tea. Plums and currants seem to be essential to shearing.

Drink is the great crime;—but I am bound to say that, as far as my observation goes, shearers are not great criminals while at their work. It is expected that they shall drink nothing from the beginning to the end of shearing. Any man known to bring spirits to the station is at once dismissed,—and a man who wanders away to some distant public-house, even when his work for the day is done, is supposed to disobey orders. In England we give men beer at their work, and make no inquiry as to their doings

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after the close of their labour,—being contented that they shall come to their work sober enough to perform it. On sheep-stations, at shearing time, to drink is not only to sin,—but to commit the one sin that cannot be forgiven. If they do drink, they drink spirits. Beer has not as yet become the beverage of the country—nor wine, as I trust it will do before long.

The washers receive wages at different rates at different stations. I may perhaps say that 3*s.* 9*d.* a day is the average payment for men out of the water, and 4*s.* 9*d.* for men in the water. These men have, in addition to this, the rations above named, without payment. I believe that the man's food,—the food that is given to him free,—costs the squatter about 5*s.* 6*d.* a week, so that a washer will earn about £1 14*s.* a week. The washer's food is cooked for him by the squatter.

The men are provided with huts or barracks in which they sleep. These are fitted up with bunks,—but each man brings his own blankets. A shearer will often take away from £25 to £30 as his wages after shearing, and a washer as much as £15. But then, alas, comes the time for drinking!

I spent a very pleasant time on the Darling Downs,—perhaps the more so because the rigid rule which prevailed in the wool-shed and at the washpool in regard to alcohol was not held to be imperative at the squatters' houses. I could hardly understand how a hospitable gentleman could press me to fill my glass again,—as hospitable gentlemen did do very often,—while he dilated on the wickedness of a shearer who should venture to think of a glass of rum. I took it all in good part, and preached no sermons on that subject. I had some very good kangaroo hunting,—and was surprised to find how well horses could carry me which went out every day, eat nothing but grass, and had no shoes on their feet.

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CHAPTER VI.

SUGAR. LABOUR FROM THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.

Wool is no doubt the staple produce of Queensland, as it is of the other colonies; but in Queensland, next to wool, sugar has lately become the most important article. It has been found that much of the soil is fitted for the growth of the sugar-cane, and that in many districts the climate is equally favourable. The best sugar district is about Port Mackay, north of Rockhampton, which I did not visit. But the growth of the cane, which is a purely agricultural employment, has hitherto, all the world over, been joined with the two manufacturing trades of making sugar and distilling rum. In Cuba, in British Guiana, in the West Indies, and, I believe, also in the Mauritius, sugar and rum are always made by the planter. At first it seemed to be necessary that this should be done also in Queensland, and therefore the growth of cane was impeded by the necessity of a large capital,—or of a crushing debt. Gradually the old idea on this subject is vanishing, and small men,—free-selecters and others,—are growing cane for sale to the owners of the mills. Their future success or failure is a question altogether of labour,—and it is one which is now trembling in uncertainty. Queensland at present is supplying itself with labour from the South Sea Islands, and the men employed are called Polynesians, or Canakers, or Islanders; but it may be a question whether Queensland will be allowed to do so long. The philanthropists are hard at work to hinder them,—working as they always do with the best intentions, working as they so often do in much ignorance.

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I may as well go into the question of South Sea Island labour at once,—premising, if I may be allowed to do so, that some years since I ventured to express an opinion, exactly similar to that I now entertain, in reference to the employment of Coolie labour for the growth of sugar in Demerara and Trinidad,—which colonies I found on the road to renewed success through the instrumentality of a body of imported workmen, who were treated with uniform kindness and care. Then as now there was a fear in England that these foreigners in a new country would become slaves under new bonds, and that a state of things would be produced,—less horrible indeed than the slavery of the negroes who were brought into the West Indies by the Spaniards, but equally unjust and equally opposed to the rights and interests of the men concerned. And it was alleged then that benevolence and good intention on the part of those who might first institute such an immigration of foreign labourers, would not suffice to protect a crowd of poor ignorant strangers from the natural greed of the employer,—who would carry on his operations far from strict control, far from the eyes of England, altogether out of sight of Exeter Hall. Is it not incumbent on philanthropy in the present age to see that no new form of serfdom be introduced,—at any rate on soil owned by the British Crown,—and to guard with all the eyes of Argus any approaches to the abomination of slavery? That is the argument from the philanthropical side, stated, I trust, fairly, —and that argument I do not pretend to combat. Let us have no slavery, in God's name. Be careful. Guard the approaches. Defend the defenceless. Protect the poor ignorant dusky foreigner from the possible rapacity of the sugar-planter. But, in doing this, know at any rate what you are doing, and be not led away by a rampant enthusiasm to do evil to all parties. Remember the bear who knocked out his friend's brains with the brickbat when he strove to save him from the fly. An ill-conducted enthusiasm may not only debar Queensland from the labour which she requires, but debar also these poor savages from their best and nearest civilisation. Let philanthropists at any rate look into the

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matter somewhat closely before they make heavy charges against the Queensland government and the Queensland sugar-growers because they employ Islanders in the colony. If they be in earnest let them send over some one who may learn the truth for them,—some agent or messenger capable of finding out the truth and of telling them without prejudice what are the real facts of this trade.

When I was in Queensland I saw that the attention of the House of Commons at home was drawn to the matter, and that our own Colonial Secretary, if not frightened, was at any rate not quite assured on the subject. It is hard enough for a Colonial Secretary to get accurate information as to facts in a self-governing colony. He applies to the governor, and the governor applies to the executive officers,—and the executive officers in the colony are the very men of whose management or mismanagement in such an affair as this the philanthropists at home stand especially in dread. But I observe that the Queensland prime minister, in concluding a report on the subject to the acting-governor of Queensland, on the 12th of April, 1871, makes to the home government the very suggestion which I have made to the philanthropists. "So much misapprehension," he says, "exists in England with reference to the introduction of these Islanders, that I would suggest to your Excellency the desirability of making such representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies as would lead to the appointment by the Imperial government of a commission to examine into and report upon the whole subject." This was written in consequence of a representation made to the Colonial Office at home, by certain gentlemen of whom I intend to speak in no mocking sense when I call them philanthropists;—and was grounded on reports made either to them or in the public press by two gentlemen at Brisbane adverse to the system of Polynesian labour.

I will now describe "the state of things," as clearly as I can, and will explain what I believe to be the cause of opposition to it in the colony. These Polynesians are brought into Queensland in vessels under government superintendence, and in conformity with an act of the Queensland

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parliament passed with the view of protecting them from the rapacity of merchants and the possible evil of kidnapping by British or colonial captains. There is also attached to every such vessel a government agent. The act of parliament was in full force when the representation was made to which I have alluded; but the appointment of a government agent was since introduced,—introduced for aught I know in consequence of the representation. The act, dated March 8th, 1868, is long, and will hardly bear quotation; but all the clauses are arranged so as to protect the Polynesian labourer,—to protect him specially in his act of emigration from home,—and to insure that justice shall be done to him on his arrival in Queensland. His clothes and diet aboard ship are prescribed, his clothes and diet during his sojourn with his master are fixed; his wages are fixed, and the means of return at the end of three years' work in the colony, without cost to himself, are insured to him. He is to have,—

DIET.

Beef or mutton	1 lb. daily.
Bread or flour	1 lb. ,,
Molasses or sugar	5 oz. ,,
Vegetables or rice 4 oz., or maize meal 8 oz.	2 lb. ,,
Tobacco	1½ oz. weekly.
Salt	2 oz. ,,
Soap	4 oz. ,,

CLOTHING.

Shirts	2 yearly.
Trousers	2 ,,
Hat	1 ,,
Blankets (a pair)	1 ,,

And he is to be provided with residence and medical attendance. He can be transferred from one employer to another, but not without the sanction of the government. He cannot be moved out of the colony till the expiration of the three years without his own consent and that of the governor. He cannot be punished otherwise than by appeal to a magisterial bench,—in which case he would be

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dealt with as would be any other person accused of breaking the law. At the end of the three years he receives wages at the rate of £6 per annum;—or £18 in all. This must be paid to him in money, and this he invariably lays out in the purchase of articles which he takes back with him to the islands,—tools, calico, cloth, small pieces of furniture, boxes, ornaments, and the like. In considering the amount of money-wages the master will bear in mind that the man has been fed, housed, and clothed, and that the wages represent his savings.

I have seen these men working under various masters and at various employments. No doubt their importance to Queensland mainly attaches to the growth and manufacture of sugar; but they are also engaged in wharves, about the towns, in meat-preserving establishments, in some instances as shepherds, and occasionally as domestic servants. I have told how I was rowed up the river Mary by a crew of these islanders. They are always clean, and bright, and pleasant to be seen. They work well, but they know their own position and importance. I never saw one ill used. I never heard of any such ill-usage. The question to my mind is whether they are not fostered too closely,—wrapped up too warmly in the lambswool of government protection. Their dietary is one which an English rural labourer may well envy,—as he might also, if he knew it, the general immunity from the crushing cares of toil which these young savages enjoy.

But I am unaware that any serious complaint has been made either by the English philanthropists or by their informants, the colonists, as to the treatment which these men receive in Queensland. The charge is that they are kidnapped,—taken on board the vessels from the islands surreptitiously,—and that they are ill treated on the journey; that the horrors of the middle passage,—as we used to call it when we spoke of the sufferings of the poor Africans,—are in some sort repeated. As regards the immigration into Queensland I believe the charge to be substantially without foundation. The vessels are worked under government surveillance, and every vessel employed in the trade is now

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accompanied by a government agent. The rule to this effect, which was subsequently added to the law as to the treatment of the men passed in 1868, is no doubt a salutary safeguard. I could not, however, learn that previous to this latter order islanders had been kidnapped for Queensland, though accusations to that effect are rife. The English philanthropists add to their memorial a postscript containing a statement from a gentleman at Melbourne that islanders have been kidnapped and taken to Fiji. I believe that this has been done;—but as neither the islands from which the Polynesian emigrants are brought, nor the Fiji Islands, are as yet even under British protectorate, neither Great Britain nor her colonies can be held to be responsible for the evil.

No doubt the entire colony of Queensland is not in favour of Polynesian labour. But the opposition to it which exists did not spring from the causes which are at work with the English philanthropists. With them the sole object is to prevent a possible return to some form of slavery, and the ill-usage of a certain number of their fellow men. No one charges them with other motives, or believes them to be actuated by other than the purest feelings. But the motives and feelings which have produced the opposition to which they have adhered are other than theirs. Protection of white labour is the cause of that opposition. In Queensland, as elsewhere throughout the world, the political questions which most strongly stir the minds of men are those which refer to the joint employment of labour and capital. The white man in Queensland who can now earn 15*s.* or 20*s.* a week and his food would like to earn 25*s.* or 30*s.*—in which desire all the world will sympathize with him. And he believes that his desire may be best accomplished by preventing the use of cheaper labour than his own. In this belief, and in the efforts to which it gives rise, the world will not sympathize with him. The belief is as erroneous as the efforts are vicious. It is in some sort a repetition of the infantine political economy which many years ago induced rural labourers in England to destroy thrashing machines and burn out the farmers who used them. It is not necessary for me now to adduce arguments to show that the greater the products of

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the colony the more general will be the aggregate prosperity of the colonists. The white labourer in Queensland, who is not a good political economist, does believe that cheaper labour than his own is injurious to himself, and therefore desires to keep the Polynesians away. He does not understand that the very business in which he is allowed to earn 4*s.* or 4*s.* 6*d.* a day would not exist,—could not be carried on,—without another class of labour at the rate of 2*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* a day. He therefore becomes quite as zealous in the cause as the philanthropist at home; but he in his zeal hates the shining Polynesian, whom he sees, with a warmth greater even than that which the philanthropist throws into his love for his unseen man and brother. There are a pair of hands, and a supple body, and a willing spirit, and a ready brain, to be had for 2*s.* a day,—underselling the white man's labour after a fashion most nefarious to the white labourer's imagination! How can this crushing evil be avoided? Are there no means by which good labour at 2*s.* a day may be made impossible,—a thing not to be obtained in the colony of Queensland? Then the white labourer, with indistinct intelligence on the subject, hears something of his philanthropical friends at Exeter Hall, and begins to find that there may be common cause between them. White labour in the colony may be protected from Exeter Hall, though Exeter Hall itself has no such intention. The white labourer soon finds a go-between,—soon comes into communication with some gentleman, anxious for his vote, who can make statements to the philanthropists at home.

It may be taken for granted that the sole object in England on the part of those who object to the emigration of Polynesians to Queensland is to save the islanders from suffering and oppression. It is said of these islanders that as they cannot understand English,—and as they speak various languages among themselves, in regard to which it is impossible for us to send interpreters who shall understand them all,—therefore they cannot understand the contracts made with them. That they understand the verbal niceties of these contracts no one can imagine. Their contracts to them are very much the same as are our legal documents

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to most of us at home. We sign them, however, because, from various concurrent causes, we believe them to be conducive to our advantage,—not because we understand them. We trust the person who asks for our signature; and, though we know that there is sometimes deceit and consequent misfortune, we believe that the chances are in our favour. Experience has taught us to trust. These islanders are in precisely the same condition. Those who go to Queensland for three years are sent back to their islands with their hands full, in good health, and with reports of a life far better than that which Providence has given them at home. It is on the reports of these men that new contracts are now made, —and it is by the experience thus gained that they who have served for one term of three years are induced to return for another term.

Though the white man be jealous of cheap labour from the islands, hoeing canes within the tropics is not an employment which he likes for himself, and the best sugar ground of Queensland is north of the tropical line. Much sugar is grown south of the line, in the Maryborough district for instance, and in East Moreton,—and sugar is grown also in certain districts in New South Wales. But if Australian sugar ever compete in the markets of the world with sugar from Demerara, Cuba, and Mauritius, it will be produced in North Queensland. Both soil and climate are propitious, and the district, though hot, is healthy. The best land in the best localities is already becoming scarce and dear;—for sugar can never be profitably grown without easy means of transit from the cane-fields to the mill, and of sugar from the mill to the seaport. The trade must be carried on along the coast and river banks, and up creeks, wide, and constant enough in their running to admit of some rough mode of water carriage. I believe that it is already becoming difficult to procure land fitly situated. But the failure or success of the business will, I think, depend altogether on the manner in which the question of labour shall be settled. If the South Sea Islanders be expelled, it is possible that Chinese or Indian coolies may take their place. The exodus of the Chinese is probably as yet hardly more

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than commenced. But without imported labour I doubt whether Queensland sugar can be grown.

I found the cost to the sugar-planter of these Polynesians to be about £75 per head for the whole term of three years,—which was divided as follows:—

Journey out and back (which is always paid for by the employer of the man)	£15
Average cost of getting the man up to the station	3
Wages for three years	18
Rations (3*s.* 9*d.* a week, say for three years)	30
Blankets, clothes, &c.	6
For lost time by illness, &c. (say)	3
	£75

This amounts to nearly 10*s.* a week for the entire time. The average wages of a white man on a plantation may be taken at about 25*s.* a week, including rations. I was told by more than one sugar-grower that two islanders were worth three white men among the canes.

As yet the produce of the colony about supplies the colony. Some sugar is exported to New South Wales. Some sugar is imported from the Mauritius;—the exports and imports being about equal. The retail price is from 3½*d.* to 4½*d.* a pound according to quality. Should the trade go on and flourish it must be made prosperous by supplying markets beyond the bounds of Queensland, and to the Englishman who has not studied the colonies it would appear natural that the desired market should be found in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. The Englishman who has not studied the colonies can hardly bring himself to understand that Australia is not one whole,—that there is as much difficulty in commercial communication between Brisbane and Melbourne as there is between Liverpool and New York,—infinitely more than in that between London and Havre. These colonies lay duties on each other at diverse rates. Tasmania charges 6*s.* a cwt. on imported raw sugar, Victoria 3*s.* a cwt. New South Wales 5*s.*, New Zealand 1*d.* a lb. or 9*s.* 4*d.* a cwt. So that sugar from Queensland has no preference in the other colonies

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over sugar from the Mauritius. Nor under the existing state of the British law as it affects the colonies could such preference be given. New South Wales, for instance, may decide for herself whether she will admit sugar free, or whether she will raise a custom duty upon its import; but she cannot take Queensland sugar free and refuse to take sugar free from other sugar-growing countries. As the colonies at present stand in reference to each other,—with the existing feeling of jealousy, and occasionally almost of hostility,—with a condition of things in which a minister in one colony speaks in his parliament of another as a "friendly colony," in the spirit in which our ministers at home call this or that nation a "friendly country," or an "allied country," laying stress on the alliance, when we know that we are on the brink of war with that country,—with these mutual rivalries and almost antipathies, this British law, tending as it does to the separation of Australian interests, has no very strong immediate effect. The colonies are determined to be separate. Australia is a term that finds no response in the patriotic feeling of any Australian. They are Victorians, or Queenslanders, or men of New South Wales; and each is not at present unwilling to have the pleasure of taxing the other. But this will come to an end sooner or later. The name of Australia will be dearer if not greater to Australian ears than the name of Great Britain, and then the produce of the land will pass free throughout the land.

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CHAPTER VII.

GOVERNMENT.

THE system of government is very nearly the same in all the Australian colonies, though the system of politics in vogue may vary considerably. Protection at the present moment is rife in Victoria, but is not in favour in Queensland. In Queensland the interests of the squatters prevail: but in Victoria the squatters are not in the ascendant. In Queensland the ministers and people generally are inclined to be submissive to the Colonial Office at home, with an inclination to hang upon English advice, and to maintain English influences. In Victoria, on the other hand, the Colonial Office in Downing Street is not highly respected, and the politicians of the day are inclined to think that they can best "paddle their own canoe." These are political differences, depending on the leading men of the hour, and on the chance circumstances of the colony at the moment. But the forms of legislative and executive administration are nearly identical,—as much so, I think, as they are in the different States of the American Union.

Kings, Lords, and Commons prevail in the colonies as they do at home,—with some variations. The governor enacts the office of king, but he does so with a political responsibility which does not attach to the throne with us. At home the royal veto has become obsolete. The sovereign and the ministry of the day must necessarily be in accord. If the ministers differ from parliament on any matter of moment, they go out of office, and another set of men comes in, supported by majorities. By such a system there can

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be no need of a veto,—as the parliament which submits its bills to the crown controls the ministers which advise the crown. But in a colony,—even in a colony with representative institutions,—the working is different. The colonial ministers no doubt advise the governor in council; but he is subject to instructions from home. And the legislative powers of the colonies are limited in certain directions. No law is to be passed contrary to the spirit of the laws of England. The governor, therefore, does exercise a temporary veto not unfrequently,—submitting the matter home for decision. In Queensland not long since the ministers of the day proposed a law by which paper money would have become inconvertible, and would have been substituted for gold as the legal tender of the country. The governor refused his acquiescence, and was supported by the Colonial Office at home. In this way the colonies are preserved from crude legislation, which would be the certain and natural result of inexperience in statecraft. In saying this I by no means intend to cast a slur on colonial ministers, or to imply that inefficient men have been chosen for high offices. I certainly make no such charge in regard to Queensland. But it cannot be expected that a colony with a population of 120,000 souls should be able to produce a ministry skilled at all points in questions of government and finance. Among such a population the minister chosen will usually be a gentleman intent on his own profession,—whatever that may be; whose education and chances in life have made him a lawyer, a merchant, or a squatter. Such a man finds himself suddenly in parliament, and almost as suddenly a minister of state,—a colonial secretary or prime minister,—or perhaps a colonial treasurer or chancellor of the exchequer,—backed by a majority in parliament, and enabled therefore, as far as the colonial parliament is concerned, to carry his own measures. His inexperience is brought face to face with the inexperience of a small chamber,—just as the experience of a minister with us is encountered by the experience of a very large chamber. Though the interests of the colony are comparatively small,—because the numbers are small,—the benefits or injuries which may

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be the result of good or bad legislation will be as great to the few, as they are to the many in crowded communities. It is by no means wonderful that it should appear expedient to six or seven gentlemen in Queensland that inconvertible paper should be the safest circulating medium for the colonists; but it would be highly prejudicial to the colony that such a question should be left to the unassisted wisdom of these six or seven gentlemen,—and perhaps altogether ruinous. It may be that each of these six or seven should be superior in all good gifts, in eloquence, patriotism, and natural sense, to any secretary of state at home. It is by no means to be supposed that a minister of state in England must be superior to a minister in Queensland, because the one is an Englishman and the other a colonist. But the concrete wisdom of thirty million people is greater than that of a hundred and twenty thousand, and the experience of ages of legislation is needed to control the newness and rawness of a parliament that has existed but for a few years.

This probably is the strongest existing reason for maintaining the present dependent condition of the Australian colonies. There are other reasons, all strong against immediate change;—the possible need of protection in case of attack, which protection we should give with more heartiness and certainty to a colony than to an ally;—the absence of any Australian feeling between the colonies of a nature strong enough to bind them into one whole;—the doubt which would be felt both at home and in the colonies as to the form of government to be selected; the general dislike to a republic and the difficulties which stand in the way of the establishment of a monarchy,—all these objections are valid against that idea of immediate independence which is not without its supporters in England. But strongest among them all is the necessary inexperience of colonial statesmen. The need for guidance and control is that of the youth who is no longer a boy but is not as yet quite a man. He may be better educated than his father, of a higher intellect, of finer aspirations, giving promise of almost Darwinian improvement in his descent;—but he cannot be trusted to go quite alone till he has been taught by experience that paper,

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without gold to back it, will not long supply his necessities,—till he shall have learned that and other worldly lessons which will not come simply from high intellect and fine aspirations.

The governor, with his instructions from home, and his power of reserving new laws till they shall have been submitted to the judgment of the minister at home, enacts the part of king. He is assisted by an executive council of which he is the president, and which consists of his ministers. The premier is the vice-president, and has, I think, always in Queensland filled the office of colonial secretary. This council is the counterpart of our cabinet. The position of the Colonial Governor is different from that of the sovereign in this,—that he is supposed to be consulted as to the measures which are introduced, and that the Constitution does not require him to be in accord with his ministers. Should he differ from them as to a bill which they have succeeded in passing, he has the power of referring the matter to the Home Government.

In Queensland there are, as a rule, six executive ministers. During my visit to the colony there was a seventh member of the cabinet, who held, however, no office and received no salary. Of these six the Constitution requires that only one shall be in the upper chamber,—or legislative council. The other five are supposed to find seats for themselves in the lower house, or legislative assembly,—though there is nothing in the Constitution to make this imperative. There is a colonial secretary,—who seems to combine all duties which do not naturally fall to the lot of his brethren;—a colonial treasurer; a chancellor of the exchequer; a minister for works and gold-fields; a minister for lands; a postmaster-general; and an attorney-general. These gentlemen exercise the patronage of the colony among them, and are much belied if they do not regard that duty as being equal in importance to any that is confided to them. Patronage is indeed one of the greatest curses of the colonies. The public is never a very good paymaster. In no country are fortunes to be made in the public service,—unless such be done by the ministers of a despot. But there is always a

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craving for official salaries,—even though these salaries be hardly sufficient to give bread and meat. In the United States the public servants are among the most needy of the citizens. In Washington the clerks attached to the public offices can barely exist on their pay. But in the United States the demand for office is so great that expectant presidents are required to come to terms as to the manipulation of patronage before they are assured of the support of their parties. I regret to say that the same greed for public place is growing up in the colonies,—even in a colony so new as Queensland. A minister must make sure of his seat, and constituents demand their share of the plunder,—as they do also not unfrequently elsewhere.

Our House of Lords is represented in the colonies by the legislative council, which consists of twenty-one members. These are nominated by the governor for life, the governor being of course subject in this matter to the advice of his ministers. The nomination therefore practically rests with the premier. With us at home there is a very general feeling that the power and influence of the House of Lords is on the wane in regard to political action. Our Lords can of course throw out bills, and they do throw out bills very often. But we have taught ourselves to believe that they should not throw out any bill as to which the country shows itself to be in earnest above three or four times at the furthest. They are presumed to be compressible after a certain amount of resistance, and are supposed to be allowed to hold their position by reason of their compressibility. The legislative council in an Australian parliament is intended to be endowed with similar privileges and similar feebleness. Their sittings are short and uninteresting, but the chamber in which they are held is imposing and comfortable. The copy of the home institution is very faithful, —with the exception of course of the hereditary element. As the members hold their seats for life, many of them are of course old, and as the age of the colony advances they will become older. Nothing can be more respectable and well-behaved than an Australian legislative council, and I believe that among legislative councils none is better be-

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haved than that of Queensland. But the feebleness is there. It is at any rate supposed to be there. When you are told that a gentleman has been nominated to the upper house, it is intended that you should understand that he has been laid honourably on the shelf. It is, however, competent to him to come down from the shelf and again to enter upon the arena of true political action,—a privilege which is altogether denied to members of the upper house with us.

The arena for political action is the legislative assembly, in which ministers with their friends sit on the right of the Speaker, and the opposition on the left, with a great table between them, and benches below the gangway,—just as we have it at home. When I was in Queensland the House consisted of thirty-two members, but it was then in contemplation to add twelve to the number. I had no opportunity of being present at a debate, as a general election was going on while I was in the colony, and the new House had not as yet sat when I left it. A majority of six was prepared to support the government,—which had, I was informed, dissolved the House with a majority of one. I read some past debates and was not astonished to find that considerable latitude was allowed in the use of vehement language. Such is always the case in a small chamber, in which the united common sense of the whole is not sufficiently extended to repress the temporary folly of one or two. Since I left Queensland a most discreditable scene has taken place in the House,—of such a nature that its repetition would be most injurious to the colony. One honourable member, in the heat of debate and after dinner, plucked another honourable member by the beard,—and then ran away. It is fair, however, to add that he was driven to resign his seat, and was not re-elected. The proceedings have, however, as a rule, been orderly in Queensland, and creditable to the colony. Men have been got together anxious for the welfare of the colony,—who have acted with greater legislative discretion than a just expectation could have hoped to obtain from so small a population thinly spread over so immense an area. There must always be danger that a parliament selected from a few scattered inhabitants will fail

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in achieving the work of its constituencies or in gaining the respect of the world at large; and the smaller the number, the greater will be the danger. At first there were but twenty-six members in the Queensland Assembly. There is nothing in the corporate strength of such a chamber to control the energy of the would-be orator; it has no traditions of its own by which to regulate its practice; it feels itself to be but a little copy of a great institution, and is half ashamed of its own pretensions. It may so easily become rowdy, while decorum is so difficult! It is felt that the majesty with which our parliament at home is invested should be copied, but that it can hardly be copied without absurdity! Queensland began her self-government with about 20,000 souls,—and it must be admitted that there was danger. But the Queensland Assembly has not been distinguished for rowdiness among colonial parliaments, and has held up its head, and done its work, and attained that respect without which a parliament must be worthless.

In Queensland the system which regulates a man's capacity to vote for a member of the legislative assembly is certainly not democratic. Every man aged twenty-one can vote, provided that he is possessed of one of the following qualifications,—which qualification, however, must appertain to the district or town in regard to which the vote is to be given. He must have resided for six months. He must then possess some one of the following positions:—

Own a freehold, worth £100 above incumbrances.
Occupy a tenement worth £10 per annum.
Hold a lease of £10 per annum, of which three years are still to run, or of which three years have already run.
Hold a pastoral licence.
Enjoy a salary of £100 per annum.
Pay £40 per annum for board and lodging.
Or pay £10 for lodging only.

By this law the nomad tribes of wandering labourers,—or of wandering beggars, as many of them may be more properly described—are excluded from the registers.

It cannot be said that this young colony has shown any tendency to run headlong into the tempting dangers of

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democracy. It would appear that the prevailing feelings of the people lie altogether in the other direction. As I have said, I fear more than once before, the squatters are the aristocracy of the country, and I found that a cabinet with seven members contained six squatters. The general election which took place while I was there supported this ministry by a majority of six in a House of thirty-two members, giving nineteen on one side to thirteen on the other. This would be equal to a majority of one hundred and twenty in a House of six hundred and forty,—a result which would with us be taken as showing the sense of the country very plainly. At home, in England, we are inclined to regard the institutions of our Australian colonies as being essentially democratic,—as showing almost republican propensities. In this, I think, we are mistaken,—certainly as regards Queensland. Among the working population outside the towns political feeling is not strong in any direction. Men care little about politics,—not connecting this or that set of ministers with the one important subject of wages. In some districts a certain amount of zeal has been aroused against cheap labour,—and here and there an election may have been turned by the feeling of white men in that direction. The opposition to squatters comes of course from the towns, and chiefly from the metropolis. But it cannot be described as being strong or enthusiastic, and is chiefly due to the ambition of men who, sitting on the left hand of the Speaker, are filled with a natural desire to sit on the right. I am inclined to report as my opinion that politics in Queensland are very quiet, whereas the loyalty to the Crown is very strong.

Nothing strikes a visitor to the colony more forcibly than the desire to hold government place. I myself would certainly not have expected that this would be so among a young population, eager for independence, to whose energy unlimited acres are open, and among whom it cannot be said that the professions and pursuits of commerce are overcrowded. The government pay is not excessively liberal, and the positions when gained do not seem to be very enviable. Four or five hundred a year is a paradise of

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government promotion, to which but very few can hope to attain. But the thing when seen from a distance allures by its uncertainty,—and I fear also by a conviction that the "government stroke" may be a light stroke of work. In colonial parlance the government stroke is that light and easy mode of labour,—perhaps that semblance of labour,—which no other master will endure, though government is forced to put up with it. With us the government stroke has happily taken quite another phase. It is to be hoped that it may gradually be made to do so in the colonies. That the longing for government employment, with the cringing and threats and back-door interest necessary to obtain it, should be made to cease also, is more perhaps than can be at once expected.

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CHAPTER VIII.

LABOUR.

In the preceding pages I have already spoken of the rates of wages in Queensland, but the condition of the labourer cannot be judged simply from the wages he may earn. In Queensland they are high,—so high as to be very tempting to the would-be English emigrant; but the emigrant should learn more than the current rate of wages before he resolves that he will attempt to make himself happy in a new country. As our colonies are chiefly serviceable to us and to the world as offering fields in which labour may make men prosperous and happy, it is essential that something should be known on this matter. After all, democratic institutions, form of government, ballot, responsible ministers, and the like, are but fleabites on the great body of the people. They are talked about, and seen, and known,—and are apt subjects for enthusiastic conversation; but when one gets half an inch below the surface, one finds that questions of politics are but of little interest. It is not the political shoe which pinches,—at any rate, in the colonies. How much can a man earn, and with what smallest amount of labour;—and what privileges may a man enjoy while he is earning it? And with what smallest amount of capital can a man settle himself on the soil and live, so that he shall be his own master and owe no obedience to any one? And if a man shall venture so to settle himself and be independent with some smallest imaginable capital,—£2 10*s*., we will say, as the first payment on forty acres of selected agricultural land, and £7 10*s*. to build a hut with, &c.,—what probability is there that he may be able to live honestly and pay further

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annual instalments? And if not honestly,—then must he starve, or will any other way be open to him? And, in living, what will be the nature of his life? The labourer here at home has certainly a hard time. His lines have not fallen to him in pleasant places. The farmer's labourer, the carter, ploughman, or hedger and ditcher, with 11*s.* a week and a wife and four children, must often wonder at the inequality of things, and, if he be imaginative, be tempted into strange thoughts as to God's doings. He has as yet been able to defend his labour by no trade's union, to influence the farmer by no fear of a strike in the parish, and has been powerless to demand more than sufficient bread to keep body and soul together. He is only now making the attempt, urged to do so by the eloquence of outside friends. He is not imaginative, and is too apt to bear his fardel patiently. He hears nothing of Queensland or other colonies,—unless by some special chance in his favour,—and knows no better than to have his body and soul kept together for him. An author would do something useful who could get at him, at him and at his boys as they rise in the world, and tell them what would really befall them if, through friends, or by colonial bounty, or State aid, or by personal industry, they,—or any one of them,—could manage to be landed on the shores of Queensland.

I take it that plenty to eat is, all the world over, the first desire of man and woman. When a man has plenty to eat as a matter of course,—when his food comes to him as does the air which he breathes,—he is apt to think that his own first desires are of a sublimer nature; but any accident in the supplies for twenty-four hours will teach the truth on this subject to the most high-minded. I can imagine that a leg of mutton looms as large to an Essex delver and is as glorious a future, as a seat in parliament to a young barrister. There are legs of mutton, if only it might be possible to get at one! Let the delver get to Queensland and he will at any rate have legs of mutton. Meat three times a day is the normal condition of the Queensland labourer. In the colony mutton may be worth twopence per pound; but of the price the labourer takes no heed.

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He is provided as a matter of course with rations,—fourteen pounds of meat a week is the ordinary allowance for a labourer in Queensland,—and, as regards food for himself, he is called upon to take no thought of the morrow, any more than if he were a babe. Fourteen pounds of meat, eight pounds of flour, two pounds of sugar, and a quarter of a pound of tea are allotted to him weekly. This in England would cost, at the lowest price, something over 12*s.* a week, —more than the labourer can earn altogether,—and this the labourer in Queensland enjoys as a matter of course before he comes to the question of wages.

I may, however, as well declare at once that the all but divine happiness of such a state of existence,—as it will appear to the delver at home, seems very soon to lose its brilliance in the eyes of the man when he is in Queensland. He has hardly eaten a few hundred pounds of colonial mutton, has not been on rations six months, before he has forgotten entirely that he was ever short of supply in the matter of animal food. The Irishman who has come from the unchanging perpetuity of potatoes to a plethora of meat, teaches himself to believe within twelve months that he never sat down to dinner at home without a beefsteak or a roast fowl. I came to a little dispute once with a working man at Rockhampton. "If you knew what it was," he said, "to have to eat mutton three times a day, day after day, week after week, month after month, you would not come here and tell us that we ought to be contented with our condition." Looking at the matter in his light, I see that he has some justice on his side. I told him, jeering at him ill-naturedly, that if he would give up one meal a day, he would lessen his sorrow by at least a third;—but I saw that I was not regarded as having the best of the argument. I would wish therefore that the would-be emigrating English labourer should understand that when he gets his meat in plenty it will not be to him a blessing so unalloyed as he now thinks it. Alas, is it not the same with all blessings? What is there for which we toil and sigh, which when gained does not become to us like mutton served thrice daily? The seat in parliament, the beautiful young wife, even

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accumulated wealth, all pall upon us; and we exclaim, as did my labouring friend at Rockhampton,—"If you too had to eat this mutton three times a day you would not think your condition so blessed."

But there is the blessing,—such as it is. The man who works in Queensland is at any rate sufficiently fed. The man who works at home is too often very insufficiently fed. I am of opinion that the English labourer looking at the question from his point of view will make light of that Rockhampton objection which, nevertheless, I have felt it to be my duty to lay before him. The next question is this;—will the immigrating labourer arriving at Queensland find himself sure of labour to suit him? Is it fairly certain that he will fall into one of these places, with all the mutton and flour and sugar and tea? It is at any rate all but certain that he will have no such success unless he be a man who can really work. The old, the idle, the reckless, and the soft-handed will only come to worse grief in a colony than the grief which they will leave behind them. I am speaking now of intending emigrants who purpose to reach the colony without money in their pockets;—and while so speaking I will say at once that the chances in any Australian colony are very bad both for men and women who go thither with some vague idea of earning bread by their education or their wits. The would-be government clerk, the would-be governess, the would-be schoolmaster, lawyer, storekeeper, or the like, has no more probable opening to him in an Australian town than he has in London or in Liverpool. Such a one may possibly prosper in Brisbane or elsewhere; but the would-be government clerk will probably find himself after some months of hardship a shepherd in the bush,—a condition than which nothing in humanity short of starvation can be more wretched; and the would-be governess will find herself vainly striving to fulfil the duties of a nursery-maid, should she even succeed in getting food and shelter with such intention.

But the young man with sinews and horny hands,—the man who is young enough to adapt himself to new labour,—will certainly find occupation. He is worth his rations,

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and high wages beyond his rations. On that subject of wages he will probably find himself contesting points with employers of labour. Cheap labour, or at any rate labour as cheap as possible, is in Queensland as much regarded as elsewhere. The various industrial enterprises of the country are dependent on it. In that matter of sugar it has been already stated that canes can hardly be grown successfully with white labour. In timber-sawing, meat-preserving, in the working of gold-reefs, at sheep-washing and sheep-shearing, the rate of wages to be paid is all-important; and no doubt an effort is continually being made to reduce them. But I rarely found that a white man's labour could be had for less than 15*s.* a week in addition to his rations. At meat-preserving and sugar establishments men earn from 15*s.* to 20*s.* a week. Washers at sheep-stations earn about 4*s.* a day. Shearers will earn, according to their skill and strength, from 7*s.* to 14*s.* a day, paying, however, for their own rations. These two last employments are only to be had during the last four months of the year. Shepherds on a sheep-run are paid from £30 to £40 per annum, and their rations;—but the life is a life of absolute solitude and of almost continued inaction, and ends very frequently in madness or drunkenness. In various cases I have found that these men have taken up strong Calvinistic ideas in religion,—teaching themselves in their solitary wanderings to believe that they will assuredly be damned. They live in huts by themselves, going out in the morning with their flocks, bringing them back in the evening to the enclosure or yard by which the hut is surrounded. But this miserable occupation is becoming less and less common daily, as the squatters perceive that they can fence in their paddocks at less expense than they can maintain shepherds,—and that by such a system sheep can feed both day and night. On fenced runs men called boundary-riders are employed in lieu of shepherds, and the boundary-rider will receive probably £45 per annum and his rations. He will also have the use of a horse. The wages of mechanics do not seem to be much higher than those in England,—not so, at least, in proportion to the difference found in rural or semi-rural

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employment. Carpenters and masons in small towns earn from 6*s.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* a day,—without rations,—the lower being the more common rate of the two. Gardeners and grooms, when men get employment in such occupations, receive about 20*s.* a week and rations. Maid-servants in the towns are paid 10*s.* a week,—being hired almost invariably for the short term, and not, as with us, by the month.

If we may take 17*s.* 6*d.* as the average money wages of a labouring man, he will receive in the year something over £45, besides his food. It must be understood also that in most of the occupations specified shelter is afforded;—a place, that is, in which to cook, to sleep, and to eat. The man brings his own blankets, but he has a bunk on which he can lie, and the use of a hut. If, therefore, a man be unmarried and really careful, he can very quickly save enough money to enable himself to start as a buyer of land. I now presume myself to be addressing some young English labourer; and the young English labourer is doubtless certain that, when the circumstances described become his own, he will be prudent. I hope he may. There is no reason whatever why he should not. Those among whom he works will respect and even like him the better for it,—and those for whom he works will of course do so. He will have every facility for saving his money, which will be paid to him in comparatively large sums, by cheques. Perhaps he will do so. I am bound to tell him that I have my doubts about it. I shall very much respect him if he does; but, judging from the habits of others of his class, and from the experience of those who know the colony, I think that he will take his cheque to a public-house, give it to the publican, get drunk, and remain so till the publican tells him that the cheque has been consumed. The publican will probably let him eat and drink for a fortnight, and will then turn him out penniless, to begin again. He will begin again, and repeat the same folly time after time, till he will teach himself to think that it is the normal condition of his life.

A Queensland gentleman told me the story of a certain shearer who had shorn for him year after year, and had always gone through the same process of "knocking down

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his cheque," as the work is technically called. He liked the man, and on one occasion remonstrated with him as he handed him the paper, explaining to him the madness of the proceeding. Would he not on that occasion be content to get drunk only on a portion of his money, and put the remainder into a savings-bank? No;—the man said that when he had earned his money he liked to feel that he could do what he pleased with it. So he took his cheque,—and started for the nearest town. On the following day he returned,—to the astonishment of his employer, who knew that the knocking down of so substantial a cheque should have occupied perhaps three weeks,—and told his story. Having a little silver in his pocket, and having thought much of what had been said to him, he had "planted" his cheque when he found himself near the town. In the language of the colonies, to plant a thing is to hide it. He had planted his cheque, and gone on to the publican with his silver. To set to work to get drunk was a matter of course. He did get drunk,—but the publican seemed to have had some doubt as to the propriety of supplying him freely. Why had not the man brought out his cheque in the usual manly way at once, instead of paying with loose silver for a few "nobblers" for himself and the company? The publican put him to bed drunk,—stretching him out on some bunk or board in the customary hospitable manner; but he had his suspicions. Could it be that his old friend should have no cheque after shearing? It behoved him, at any rate, to know. The knocking down of an imaginary cheque would be dreadful to the publican. So the publican stripped him and examined all his clothing, looked into his boots, and felt well through the possible secrets of every garment. The man, though drunk and drugged, was not so drunk or drugged but what he knew and understood the proceeding. He had not paid enough for a sufficient amount of drugs and liquor to make him absolutely senseless. The cheque had been securely planted, and nothing was found. On the next morning he was turned out ignominiously by the justly indignant owner of the house; but in the tree by the roadside he found his cheque, and returned with it to the station a wiser and a better man.

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And yet I do not say that the Queensland labourers are drunkards. I call a man a drunkard who is habitually drunk,—not him who gets drunk once or twice a year, though the drunkenness on those special occasions be ever so vigorous. These men at their work are almost invariably sober. The sheds or establishments at which they are employed are often far from any place at which drink can be bought, and from their employers they can get none. During their work they are not allowed to drink. In this respect they are under a restraint quite unintelligible to the ordinary English labourer. For weeks and weeks they go on, drinking nothing but tea. The pint of beer which is the Englishman's heaven is an unknown institution in the colonies. This sobriety, whether enforced or voluntary, during the period of employment has become so much a thing of course, that it is expected and is matter of no complaint. They smoke much tobacco, drink much tea, eat much mutton,—and work very hard. Then comes the short holiday, in which they knock down their cheques and live like brutes.

It must be allowed that the nature of the lives which these men live offers some excuse for their folly. During these periods of work they herd together like sailors on board a ship. Their home is at the wool-shed, or on the station, or somewhere about the establishment. They are, as it were, always subject to discipline, as are sailors and schoolboys;—and, like sailors and schoolboys, when they shake off their discipline they are "wild for a spree." There is no other spree open to the man but such as the publican can give him. He finds himself with a large sum of money in his hand,—which is all his own, and he is determined to have whatever enjoyment he can obtain. He has been debarred from liquor perhaps, for months, during which he has felt himself to be little better than a slave. Now he is free. For what has he toiled with unremitting labour and rigid enforced sobriety if he may not enjoy his freedom? So he knocks down his cheque; and then he begins again.

Of course there are varieties in the life. The man may have a wife who will restrain him, or a wife whom he will

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neglect, or a wife who can help in knocking down cheques. The married men generally do best, and are restrained, caring for their wives and children. When a man has obtained for himself a fixed home,—perhaps a homestead with a bit of land,—he returns thither instead of to a wonted drinking-shop. But the evil which I have described is so general, as to make it necessary that the would-be emigrant should know the temptations which he will encounter. We are often told in England that drink is the bane of the Australian colonies;—and as we know well the constancy of the habit with those of our own population who are given to beer or gin,—the bi-weekly or perhaps nightly attendance at the liquor-shop,—we are induced to believe that the same vice prevails in the same form but with aggravated force in Australia. Speaking, not of the towns, but of the country, I think that this is not the case. Australian drunkenness is not of the English type. It is more reckless, more extravagant, more riotous,—to the imagination of the man infinitely more magnificent;—but it is less enduring, and certainly upon the whole less debasing.

The man, even if he have no wife, need not make himself a fool and a beast. The young would-be emigrant whom I am addressing will, at any rate, resolve that he will never knock down his cheque. He has my best wishes with him in that resolution, and my assurance that if he will keep it, he will certainly save money. He is to earn wages at the rate of £45 per annum over and above his food, and, if he be unmarried, he will be at no expense for house-rent or fuel while he is employed. He must clothe himself and furnish himself with a pair of blankets. The rest of his money he may save. In three years, provided he be gifted with that power of abstaining from drink altogether which my young friend intends to exercise, he will find himself the owner of £75 or £80, even after he have maintained himself for some weeks in each year, during which he may probably have been looking for fresh employment. What shall he do with his £75 so that he may be a happy and prosperous man?

Nothing but a strong conviction on my part that I shall

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never again be in Australia, never again meet those friendly squatters at whose tables I have sat, whose hospitality I have enjoyed, with whom I have discussed these matters, and whose hatred of the free-selecter I understand and appreciate, emboldens me to tell this young man that his best opening in colonial life is to buy a bit of land. I live in the hope that at home I may yet meet many a squatter whom I have known in the colonies;—but I shall meet them one at a time, and may hope to be able to endure any attack that may be made on me. "And you,—after all that you have seen,"—the squatter would say,—"after all that we have told you, after the pains we have been at to give you colonial experience and make you know the truth,—you recommend this young man to buy land, to become a farmer on soil which will produce no farmer's crop, to place himself where he must necessarily hate and be hated, to become a cattle-stealer in order that he may live, and to bring up his children to be cattle-stealers after his example! You understand the colonies! You are ignorant of the colonies as are all Englishmen,—those who stay at home equally with those who come out here for awhile and then go back crammed with folly and falsehood by interested persons."

There is something admirable, or at least enviable, in the rock-fast conviction of men, the leading principles of whose lives have been formed by the combined strength of education, custom, and interest. It is so with the Australian squatter, who does not feel more sure that he himself will be injured by the operation of the free-selecter than that the free-selecter himself will be ruined by it. The squatter produces wool, and knows that wool is the staple produce of the colonies. To his thinking, success in wool means Australian greatness, and any drawback on that success, Australian misfortune. Any laws which may interfere with his pastoral and almost patriarchal views of life seem to him to emanate from democracy and the devil. He gets into parliament himself,—going up to Brisbane, if he be a Queenslander, at great personal inconvenience, feeling but little personal ambition as to his seat,—only that he may check the making

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of such laws. He knows that there must and will be land-laws in his colony, having the same melancholy certainty in the success of democracy and the devil as that which pervades the mind of an English Tory. He will even frame the land-law himself,—the very land-law which is to give power to the free-selecter,—as the Tory in England has framed laws for extended suffrage and the like. The English Tory when he is among his friends does not scruple to declare his hatred for the work of his own hands. In parliament it is necessary to be conciliatory, ready to yield, and almost submissive ;—but in private life every one knows of course that these changes are the work of democracy and the devil. It is really the same with the Australian Tory, as with his cousin at home. There must be land-laws, and the law must throw open the squatter's run to the rapacity of the free-selecter ;—but not the less is the free-selecter an abomination and a curse. Personally, I love a squatter. I like to hear his grievances and to sympathize with them. I can make myself at home with him ;—and can talk to him of his sheep more comfortably than I can to a miner of his gold, or a merchant of his dealings. But on principle I take the part of the free-selecter. When the young man shall have got together his £75, my advice to him is to lay it out in the purchase of land ;—a small part of it in purchase, so that the remainder may be applied to building and improvement.

As to the cattle-stealing,—at any rate it is not a necessity. That cattle-stealing and sheep-stealing are common practices, is undoubtedly true; and the squatter is generally the victim, while the free-selecter is as generally the thief. The herds and flocks are so large, and are so far removed from inspection, that such theft is easy. A beast is slain on the run, and skinned, and, if the skin be taken away or hidden, or burned, is hardly missed. A great deal is done in cattle-stealing, but I look on the assertion that free-selecters are as a rule cattle-stealers as monstrous. And it is monstrous also to suggest that a man should not purchase a tract of land, lest he should become a cattle-stealer under stress of circumstances.

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In that assertion that the free-selecting farmer can grow nothing for which he can find a ready market, there is more reliable truth. In speaking of Queensland it must be acknowledged that the free-selecter finds it difficult to get ready money for the fruits of his labour. Wheat he cannot produce. It will fail twice with him for once that it will thrive. The alternation of wet weather and dry weather are not sufficiently certain, and the periods of drought or flood are too long for the growth of wheat. I do not know that sugar and wheat have ever thriven in close neighbourhood with each other. He can grow maize, or Indian corn as we call it; and as horses in Queensland, when corn-fed at all, are fed upon maize, there is a sale for it; but the farmer selling it will probably find himself driven to truck it for tea, sugar, or other stores. In the neighbourhood of Ipswich, some five-and-twenty miles from Brisbane, the farmer may grow cotton,—for which there is a ready sale. But in truth for the present the Queensland free-selecter, if he follow my advice, will not attempt to earn his bread by selling the produce of his land. He will not at any rate regard that as the sole means or mainstay of his existence. He will build for himself a house and will gradually clear and fence his land. He will keep a few cows and poultry, and will supply himself and his family from his own farm. Then during a period of the year he will work for wages,—and will bring his cheque home with him when the work is done.

In five years or in ten, according to the mode of selection which the intending purchaser may adopt, he will be a free-holder;—but during these five or ten years he will have all the fixity of tenure in his land which belongs to a freehold. He will have learned before he makes his selection the manner in which this is to be done, and will have learned much also of the nature of the land to be selected. The system under which he will select is fully explained in an appendix to this volume, in which an extract is given from a Digest of the Queensland Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1868. It will show the intending purchaser that two modes of purchase are open to him, under one of which he may

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purchase as small a farm as forty acres, or as large a tract of land as 10,880 acres. For the forty acres he will have to pay 15*s.* an acre, but will have ten years in which to pay it,—so that he will be called upon for no more than £3 per annum, and at the end of ten years the land will be his own, if he have complied with the required conditions as to improvements. But the man whom I am now addressing will probably choose the other system,—and will buy what is called a homestead. In making this purchase he will find personal residence to be enjoined,—but personal residence will be his intention. By this system he can buy forty acres, or any number of acres not exceeding eighty, of so-called agricultural land. And for this he must pay 9*d.* an acre for five years,—3*s.* 9*d.* an acre altogether,—and then the land will be his own, to do with it as he pleases.

The terms certainly do not seem to be hard. If the ambitious would-be freeholder desire to become master of the full amount allowed,—the eighty acres of agricultural land,—he will have to pay but £3 per annum as rent in advance, and will have to pay that only for five years! It is very alluring to the would-be freeholder. Let him not, however, suppose that because the land which he will buy is described as "agricultural," that he will find hedges and ditches, furrows and headlands, and the like. The land will be land just as nature has produced it, but it will be land which on survey shall be declared to be fit for agricultural purposes.

There is perhaps no feeling stronger in the mind of man than the desire to own a morsel of land. In England efforts which have been made to enable the working man to become the owner even of the house in which he lives have hardly as yet met with much success. In the first place the price of land is too high, and in the second place the earnings of the working man are too low. In many cases in which the thing has been tried the creation of parliamentary voters has been the real object, and the possession of the freehold in the hands of the inhabitant has been no more than nominal. In England if a working man become a freeholder, he can hardly be free on his freehold. He cannot possess himself of the absolute property unencumbered by debt. If he feel

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the passion strong he must indulge it on some new-found soil, where the old forest still stands, where a man's work is as yet worth more than many acres. I do not know that he can do it anywhere on much better terms than in Queensland;—but he must understand that the land is cheap because the struggle required to make it useful is severe.

The labourer who can live and save his money, who can refrain from knocking down his cheque, may no doubt in Queensland become the real lord of all around him and dwell on his own land in actual independence. As far as I have seen the lives of such men, they never want for food,—are never without abundance of food. Meat and tea and bread they always have in their houses. The houses themselves are often rough—sheds at first made of bark till the free-selecter can with his own hands put up some stronger and more endurable edifice; but they are never so squalid as are many of our cottages at home. For a labouring man, such as I have described, life in Queensland is infinitely better than life at home. It is sometimes very rough, and must sometimes be very solitary. And Queensland is very hot. But there is plenty to eat and drink;—work is well remunerated;—and the working man, if he can refrain from drink, may hold his own in Queensland, and may enjoy as much independence as is given to any man in this world.

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APPENDIX.

Appendix No. I.

Regulations under which free-selections of Land can be made in New South Wales, taken from MacPhaile's Australian Squatting Directory.

Crown Lands, other than town or suburban lands, and not being within a gold-field, nor under lease for mining purposes to any person other than the applicant for purchase, and not being within ten miles from the outside boundary of any city or town containing according to the last census 10,000 inhabitants, or five miles from a town of 5,000 inhabitants, or three miles from a town of 1,000 inhabitants, or two miles from a town or village of 100 inhabitants, and not reserved for any public purpose, and not containing improvements, shall be open for conditional sale by selection, the selecter tendering at the Land Office a written application for the conditional purchase of not less than 40 and not more than 320 acres at 20*s.* per acre, and paying a deposit of 25 per cent., and in case there be more than one application at the same time for the same land or any part thereof, the application shall be decided by lot; and Crown lands within gold-fields, not within areas excluded by proclamation, and not occupied for gold-mining purposes, shall be open for sale in like manner, provided that properly authorised persons may, at any time, be at liberty to dig and search for gold within the land selected, and that, should such land be found to contain auriferous deposits, it shall be within the power of the Governor in Council to annul the sale, but the conditional purchaser shall be entitled to compensation by appraisement of the value other than auriferous.

If at the time of purchase such land shall not have been surveyed by the Government, temporary boundaries shall be determined by the conditional purchaser, who shall within one month after such time of purchase occupy the land. And any dispute respecting such boundaries shall be settled by arbitration: Provided that if such land shall not be surveyed by the Government within twelve months from the date of application, it shall be lawful for the purchaser to withdraw his application, and demand and recover back any deposit paid by him, or the

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purchaser shall have the option of having the land surveyed by a duly qualified licensed surveyor, and the expense of such survey shall be allowed to such purchaser as part payment of his purchase money, such expense to be allowed in accordance with the scale of charges fixed or to be fixed by the Surveyor-General.

Crown lands conditionally purchased under this Act shall, if measured by the authority of the Government previously to such purchase, be taken in portions as measured, if not exceeding 320 acres, and, if unmeasured, and having frontage to any river, creek, road, or intended road, shall, if within the first-class settled districts, have a depth of not less than twenty chains, and otherwise shall have a depth of not less than sixty chains, and shall have their boundaries, other than the frontages, directed to the cardinal points by compass, and if having no frontages as aforesaid, shall be measured in square blocks, and with boundaries directed to such cardinal points: Provided that should it seem to the Minister to be expedient, the boundaries of portions having frontages may be made approximately, at right angles with the frontage, and otherwise modified, and the boundaries of portions having no frontages may be modified, and necessary roadways and water reserves excluded from such measurement.

At the expiration of three years from the date of conditional purchase of any such land as aforesaid, or within three months thereafter, the balance of the purchase money shall be tendered at the office of the Colonial Treasurer, together with a declaration by the conditional purchaser or his alienee, or some other person in the opinion of the Minister competent in that behalf, under the Act 9 Victoria No. 9, to the effect that improvements as hereinbefore defined have been made upon such land, specifying the nature, extent, and value of such improvements, and that such land has been, from the date of occupation, the *bonâ fide* residence, either continuously of the original purchaser, or of some alienee or successive alienees of his whole estate and interest therein, and that no such alienation has been made by any holder thereof until after the *bonâ fide* residence thereon of such holder for one whole year at the least. And upon the Minister being satisfied by such declaration, and the certificate of the Land Agent of the district, or other proper officer, of the facts aforesaid, the Colonial Treasurer shall receive and acknowledge the remaining purchase-money, and a grant of the fee-simple, but with reservation of any minerals which the land may contain, shall be made to the then rightful owner: Provided that should such lands have been occupied and improved as aforesaid, and should interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum on the balance of the purchase-money be paid within the said three months to the Colonial Treasurer, the payment of such balance may be deferred to a period within three months after the 1st of January then next ensuing; and may be so deferred from year to year by payment of such interest during the first quarter of each year. But in default of the above requirements, the land shall revert to Her Majesty, and be liable to be sold at auction, and the deposit shall be forfeited.

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APPENDIX No. II.

Regulations under which free-selections of Land can be effected in Queensland, taken from a digest of the Queensland Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1868.

Conditional Purchases.

This portion of the Act contains some of the most important provisions, and embodies novel principles, both in the legislation of Queensland and the other colonies. In the first place, land can be purchased on easier terms of payment, both as regards price and time for payment, than under previous Acts. Larger areas can also be secured, by which means both agricultural and pastoral farming may be combined in one selection. Secondly, the land is classified, and the rate of purchase money proportioned to its value, in connection with its capabilities.

The foregoing are the main features in the Act relating to conditional purchases, with the exception of certain conditions which the selecter has to comply with, and which have been introduced into the Act in order to prevent undue monopoly of land, or selection solely with a view to speculative purposes. These conditions impart to the measure a practical character; as, with the encouragement afforded to purchase land on liberal terms, provision is made for its being turned to useful account, and a certain expenditure made on it.

The lands open to settlement are—

Firstly.—The Crown lands in the settled districts not under lease or licence.

Secondly.—The lands on the resumed halves of runs, inclusive of the railway reserves, which extend three miles on each side of the railway lines throughout their entire length.

Thirdly.—The lands in large township reserves, not less than two miles in a direct line from the nearest town lot.

The following will show the lands open to selection on the 31st December, 1870, in the several districts.

	Acres.
Moreton	1,994,169
Darling Downs	650,000
Wide Bay and Burnett	2,706,979
Port Curtis	3,545,600
Kennedy	4,178,020
Cook and North Cook	18,368,000
Burke	4,746,000
Total	36,188,768

These lands constitute the area available for selection under the Act.

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The areas allowed to be selected by any one person, and the rates of purchase money per acre, are as follows:—

Agricultural land, not less than 40, nor more than 640, at 15*s.* per acre.
First-class pastoral land, not less than 80, nor more than 2,560, at 10*s.* per acre.
Second-class pastoral land, not less than 80, nor more than 7,680, at 5*s.* per acre.

It is not permitted to exceed the maximum areas prescribed for each class of land. The selection may be in one or not more than three blocks—one of each class being allowed; and provision is made for adjacent lands being selected by the occupant, provided the boundaries are conterminous and the maximum area of each class is not exceeded. In township and railway reserves the land cannot be classed lower than first-class pastoral.

The mode of taking up land is in this way:—The applicant attends at a land agent's office, and having ascertained that the land which he wishes to select is available, he lodges an application in triplicate, accompanied with the amount of the first year's rent and survey fee. This application sufficiently explains itself. It contains a declaration that the applicant lives in Queensland, is above the age of twenty-one years, and that he applies for the land in his own behalf and use, and not as agent or trustee for any other person. He further declares that he intends to use the same, and that he has not entered into any agreement to sell, demise, or mortgage it. These declarations are required by the Act. The application should also contain a clear description of the boundaries, with reference to some known feature or previous survey. The area and the particulars of the first year's rent, being one-tenth of the whole purchase-money, whether in cash or land orders, are also to be furnished. With respect to the area, it may be remarked that each class of land may be included in one application. For example:—

	Acres.	*At per acre.*	*First year's rent.*
		s. d.	£ *s. d.*
Agricultural land . . .	50	1 6	3 15 0
First-class pastoral land.	100	1 0	5 0 0
Second-class pastoral land	200	0 6	5 0 0
Total . . .	350	Annual rent	£13 15 0

The applicant in the first instance puts his own class upon the land applied for. On receipt by the land agent of this application, an entry is made in a book, called the "Application Book," which the applicant signs. This entry governs the priority of the selection at the time the Commissioner deals with it, as hereafter described; and on the land agent giving the applicant a receipt for his rent, no further proceedings are to be taken until the next Commissioner's Court Sitting, which

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occurs about once a fortnight, at which the applicant or his agent must attend, when the acceptance or the rejection of the application is publicly declared. After such declaration, the deposits of rent previously paid on rejected applications are then refunded to the applicants by the Commissioner, and, in the case of those provisionally approved, instructions are sent to a surveyor to effect a survey of the selection. At the time the survey is being carried out, means are taken to verify the classification put upon the land by the selecter; and if the Commissioner, through the surveyor, or a competent witness, or his own personal knowledge, considers that the land should be classified at a higher rate, he is empowered to call upon the selecter to pay a sufficient sum to cover the balance due on such higher classification; and if the demand be not attended to within three months, the land becomes forfeited. After the boundaries are surveyed and the rents adjusted, the Government will issue a so-called lease for ten years, at a yearly rent of one-tenth of the purchase-money. This lease will contain certain provisions, of which the following are the principal ones:—

1. The lease shall date from the nearest first day of January or July to date of application.
2. The annual rent reserved for every acre, or fraction of an acre, shall be, except in the case of second payments—
   Agricultural land, 1*s.* 6*d.* per acre.
   First-class pastoral, 1*s.*
   Second-class pastoral, 6*d.*
   to be paid in cash to the land agent of the district in which the selection is situated, on or before the 31st day of March in each year.
   The second payment on all selections under the Act shall be made on or before the 31st day of March following the date of selection: and the said payment, together with the twelve months' rent paid at time of selection, shall cover the period from such selection to the next succeeding 31st day of March. The second payment in each case will, therefore, be proportionate to the number of clear months intervening between the expiration of the twelve months from date of selection and the following 31st day of March.
   As this second payment covers a broken period, the last payment under the lease (the eleventh) will be the balance of the full year's rent, which is not demanded on the 31st day of March following the date of selection. The second and the eleventh payments will, therefore, together amount to a full year's rent. All the other annual payments will be as above stated.
3. The lessee shall within six months from completion of survey erect substantial boundary posts along the measured boundaries of the land, at distances not exceeding five chains apart, or shall erect a good and substantial fence along such boundary. If the posts fall into decay, the Commissioner of the district

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can require the lessee to replace them, and if this is not done may inflict a fine for the neglect.

4. During the currency of such lease the Governor, or any person authorised in that behalf, may make entry to dig and remove gold or other metals, &c., provided that any damage done to the lessee shall be made good to him, the amount to be determined by arbitration.
5. Residence in person, or by bailiff, is necessary during the currency of the lease.
6. In the case of pastoral land,—if the lessee shall prove within three years from date of selection, by two credible witnesses, to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, that he has resided in person, or by bailiff, on the said land for a period of two years, and that a sum at the rate of not less than ten shillings per acre for first-class pastoral land, and five shillings an acre for second-class pastoral land, has been expended in substantial improvements, or that he has fenced in the said land with a substantial fence, then the Commissioner shall issue a certificate that the conditions aforesaid have been duly performed, and the lessee shall be entitled to a deed of grant in fee-simple on the payment of the balance of the ten years' rent.
7. In the case of agricultural land,—if the lessee shall similarly prove, within three years from date of selection, that he has resided in person, or by bailiff, for a period of not less than two years, and that he has expended a sum equal to ten shillings per acre, or that he has fenced in the land with a substantial fence, he shall be entitled to a certificate from the Commissioner that the conditions have been performed, and to a grant of the land on payment of the balance of the ten years' rent; but if at any time during the currency of the lease he shall prove that one-tenth part of the land has been cultivated, he shall be absolved from the conditions of residence, and a grant shall issue on payment of the balance of rent as aforesaid.
8. No transfer or assignment of any lease can be allowed until the lessee has obtained a certificate, as above described, from the Commissioner: but after the issue of such certificate, transfer may proceed, with the sanction of the Government, on payment of ten shillings for the registration thereof.
9. After the certificate is obtained, balance of purchase-money may be paid up in one sum in cash.
10. The Government reserves a right to resume land for road purposes during ten years, on payment of twice the amount which should have been paid as rent or purchase-money on such land, and when the land is enclosed, the Government will be required to fence off the road from adjacent land.

The above are the conditions on which the leases are issued. They are given in detail in order that the principle of the Act relating to

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conditional purchases may be clearly understood. It may be remembered, that a failure to comply with the conditions referred to in sections six and seven, as above, within three years, will deprive the lessee of the right to transfer his interest or to purchase the fee-simple of the land during the currency of the lease.

The general rules applicable to conditional purchases include certain restrictions respecting the shape of the selections, and the proportion of frontage allowed on rivers or roads; also, with respect to monopoly of water or other privileges, which it is not necessary to enter upon, further than to state that they are required for the protection of the public interests. It may, however, be added, that conditional purchasers are restricted, under a penalty, from depasturing more than twenty head of cattle, or fifty sheep, for every hundred acres of land, until their selections are securely fenced. This provision is rendered necessary, as the pastoral lessee is entitled to a license to depasture stock, under certain limitations, on the resumed half of the run, and, therefore, his interest has to be protected. With this view, the cattle and sheep of the conditional purchasers and pastoral licenses must have a distinctive brand, to be registered at the Commissioner's Office.

Homesteads.

The introduction of the clauses referring to homesteads in the Act, is one of its distinctive features. The idea was mainly derived from American legislation, which is universally acknowledged to have proved successful in promoting settlement on the land. It has also worked well in this colony, so far as can be judged. Since the Act came into operation, 1,661 homesteads have been taken up; and as some further particulars respecting this class of selections will probably prove interesting, a return of the number in each of the settled districts is given.

District.	*Homesteads.*
Moreton	1,239
Darling Downs	162
Wide Bay and Burnett	144
Port Curtis	67
Kennedy	49
Total	1,661

With the view of setting clearly before the public the fullest information respecting homesteads, the following compilation, embracing every particular in connection with the provisions of the Act relating to that class of selections, has been inserted. The mode of application is similar to that for conditional purchases.

Persons entitled to select homesteads.

1. Any person being a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty, who is the head of a family, or is twenty-one or more years of

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age, is entitled to select a homestead; or any person owning and residing on land, may enter other land lying contiguous to said land, which shall not with the land already owned and occupied exceed 160 acres.

Persons not entitled to select homesteads.

2. No married woman, who has not obtained a decree for judicial separation, or an order binding in Queensland, protecting her separate property, is entitled to select a homestead.

Assisted Immigrants entitled after three years' residence in the Colony.

3. Any person arriving hereafter in the colony, either wholly or in part, at the public expense, will not be entitled to select a homestead until he has lived three years continuously in the colony.

Land available for selections.

4. Selecters of homesteads are entitled to select any land proclaimed or otherwise open to general selection by lease.

Areas of homesteads.

5. Selections by homestead leases must be in one block, and are not to exceed 80 acres of agricultural or 160 acres of pastoral lands.

Roads and permanent water.

6. Applications will be subject to regulations concerning survey, roads, and prevention of monopoly of permanent water.

Applications may include two classes of land.

7. Selecters of homesteads may include the two classes of agricultural and pastoral land in their applications, provided the area of each does not exceed the proportionate equivalent of the gross acreage allowable for each class under the Act.

Improvements must be paid for.

8. Where there are improvements on the land selected as a homestead, the selecter must state in his application the nature of them, and his estimate of their value, and at the same time pay the amount to the land agent. If, on valuation, any further sum is awarded, it must be paid within one month after date of award.

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Rent payable on homestead selections.

9. The rent payable on homestead selections is 9*d.* per acre on agricultural land, and 6*d.* per acre on first and second class pastoral land, paid yearly in advance for five years from date of entry.

Payment of rent, and penalty for default.

10. The first year's rent on homestead selections must be paid either in cash or land orders at the time of making the application. The second and all subsequent annual rents must be paid to the land agent, in cash, on or before the 31st March in each year; in default of such payment the lease will be forfeited, and the land selected, and all improvements on it, will revert to the Crown. The second payments on all homesteads are computed in the same way as in the case of conditional purchases, the amount being proportionate to the number of clear months intervening between the date of selection and 31st day of March following.

Forfeiture may be defeated.

11. The lessee may defeat forfeiture for non-payment of rent by paying to the land agent in cash, within 90 days of the day on which the rent has fallen due, a sum equal to the annual rent, with one-fourth added as a penalty. But if the rent and penalty be not paid within such ninety days, the lease will be absolutely forfeited, and the lessee, or any person claiming under him, will be deemed a trespasser upon Crown lands, and liable to be removed therefrom.

Conditions to be fulfilled before Crown grant is issued.

12. The lessee or his family must have resided five years continuously on the land, and cultivated one-tenth part of it; or, in addition to residence as aforesaid, he must have fenced in the land with a good and substantial fence, during the time of five years immediately succeeding the date of his application to enter on such land. At the expiration of five years, or at any time within two years thereafter, upon proving to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of the district, by two credible witnesses, that the above conditions have been complied with, and making an affidavit that no part of said land has been alienated, the lessee will be entitled to a Crown grant.*

---

* It will be observed that in the case of a homestead the residence must be *personal*—in the case of an ordinary selection it may be by *agent.*

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May purchase at upset price.

13. The lessee may at any time after two years, and before the expiration of five years, obtain a Crown grant, by paying the upset price for the quantity of land taken up, and giving proof as before-mentioned of residence and cultivation of one-tenth part.

Lessee dying before obtaining Crown grant.

14. If the lessee die before obtaining the Crown grant, his widow, or, in case of her death, his heirs or devisees, or in case of a widow being the lessee, her heirs or devisees, on proving the fulfilment of the conditions as above, may obtain the Crown grant.

Parents dying and leaving an infant or children under twenty-one years of age.

15. If both father and mother die, leaving an infant child or children under twenty-one years of age, such child or children shall have a right to the land, and the executors, administrators, or guardians may at any time after the death of the surviving parent, sell said lands for the benefit of said infants, but for no other purpose, and the purchaser shall acquire the absolute title by the purchase, and be entitled to the Crown grant on payment of the deed fees.

Homesteads not liable for debt.

16. Homesteads acquired under the Act of 1868 are not in any case liable to the satisfaction of any debt or debts contracted prior to the issuing of the Crown grant thereof.

Mode of proceeding to obtain a homestead.

17. Having selected a site for a homestead within the limits appointed by the Government as open for selection, make application to the land agent of the district, and fill in the under-mentioned form in triplicate, which must then be declared before a magistrate, and pay the first year's rent in land orders or cash, and the survey fee in cash.

[Then follow certain forms which, as they can only be wanted in the colony, need not be reprinted here.]

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THE END.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AND

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE,

AUTHOR OF

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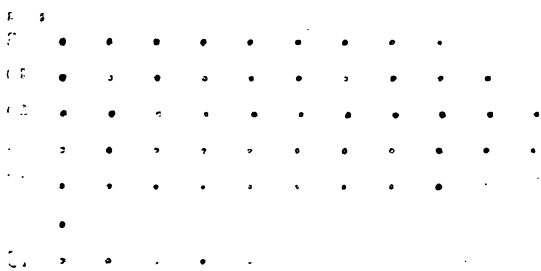
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SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA has a peculiar history of its own, differing very much from those of the other Australian colonies, though similar in some degree to that of New Zealand, which was founded after South Australia, and with aspirations of the same nature. New South Wales was taken up by Great Britain as a convict depôt, and grew as such till the free inhabitants who had followed and surrounded the convicts became numerous and strong enough to declare that they would have no more such neighbours sent among them. Van Diemen's Land, which is now Tasmania, and Moreton Bay, which is now Queensland, were occupied as convict dependencies to the parent establishment. Moreton Bay was still part of New South Wales when New South Wales refused to be any longer regarded as an English prison, and Van Diemen's Land did for herself that which New South Wales had done before. Even Port Phillip, which is now Victoria, was first occupied by convicts sent thither from the parent colony,—though it is right to say that the convict system never took root there, and that the attempt never reached fulfilment. On the same principle New South Wales sent an offshoot convict depôt to King George's Sound, which is now a part of Western Australia, —an unhappy colony which, in its sore distress, was des-

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tined to save itself from utter destruction by delivering itself to the custody of compelled immigrants, who could be made to come thither and work when others would not come. In this way all the now existing Australian colonies, except South Australia, have either owed their origin to convicts, or have been at one period of their existence fostered by convict labour; but South Australia has never been blessed—or cursed—with the custody of a single British exile.

In 1829, when Australian exploration was yet young, Captain Sturt, who had already travelled westwards from Sydney till he found and named the Darling River, and had done much towards investigating the difficult problem of the central Australian waters, received a commission from the government of New South Wales to make his way across to the Murrumbidgee River, and to discover by following its course what became of it. It was then believed by many, and among others by Captain Sturt himself, that the great waters of the continent, which had been reached but of which the estuaries were not known, ran into some huge central lake or internal sea. With the view of proving or of disproving this surmise, Captain Sturt with a few companions started on his journey, carrying with him a boat in detached pieces, in which he proposed to solve the mystery of the river. For, it must be understood, none of those maritime explorers who had surveyed, or partially surveyed, the eastern, southern, or western coasts of the continent had discovered any river mouth by which it was supposed that these waters could escape to the sea. Sturt was very zealous and ambitious to make for himself a great name among Australian explorers,—as he has done. In his account of a subsequent journey,—made into the interior after he had found that the river did not conduct him thither,—he thus describes his own feelings :—"Let any man lay the map of Australia before him and regard the blank upon its surface, and then let me ask if it would not be an honourable achievement to be the first to place foot upon its centre." This he did, subsequently, in 1845; but in 1829—1830 he and his companions made their way down the Murrumbidgee

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till that large river joined a still greater stream, which he first called the Murray. The upper part of this river had been crossed by Hovell and Hume in 1826, and had then been called the Hume. But the name given by Sturt is the one by which it will hereafter be known. He followed it till it was joined by another large river, which he rightly presumed to be that Darling which he had himself discovered on a former journey. Still going on he came to the "Great Bend" which the Murray makes. Hitherto the course of the wanderers down the Murrumbidgee and down the Murray had been nearly due west. From the Bend the Murray runs south, and from henceforth it waters a territory which is now a part of the province or colony of South Australia.

Sturt, when he had progressed for a while southwards, must have begun to perceive that that surmise as to a great inland sea was incorrect. For the waters both of the Murrumbidgee and the Darling he had so far accounted, and he was now taking with him down to the Southern Ocean the confluence of the three rivers. It is not my purpose in this book to describe the explorations of Australia, and I will not therefore stop to dwell upon the dangers which Sturt encountered. But it should be remembered that he was forced to carry with him all the provisions for his party, that he had no guide except the course of the waters which he was bound to follow, and that as he went he was accompanied along the banks by tribes of black natives, who, if not absolutely hostile, were astonished, suspicious, and irascible. Why they did not surround and destroy him and his little party we can hardly conceive. As far as we yet know, no white man had been there before, and yet it appears from Sturt's account that the natives frequently evinced no astonishment whatever at firearms, looking on while birds were shot, and not even condescending to admire the precision with which they were killed.

He went on southwards till he entered a big lake,—now called Lake Alexandrina. There are indeed a succession of lakes or inland waters here, of which Lakes Alexandrina and Albert are very shallow, rarely having as much as six

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feet of water, which is fresh or very nearly fresh,—and the Coorong River, which is salt, and, although as much within the mouth as are the lakes, must be regarded as an inlet of the sea. Of Lake Albert and the Coorong River, Sturt appears to have seen nothing, but he did make his way with extreme difficulty through the tortuous, narrow, and shallow opening of the river which takes the waters of the lake down to the sea in Encounter Bay,—and then perceived that for purposes of seaborne navigation the great river of which he had followed the course must always be useless. "Thus," he says, "were our fears of the impracticability and inutility of the chain of communication between the lake and the ocean confirmed."

Having so far succeeded, and so far failed, he was called upon to decide what he would do next. He could see to the westward ranges of hills, which he rightly conceived to be those which Captain Flinders had described after surveying the coasts of Gulf St. Vincent and Spencer's Gulf. Flinders had called these hills Mount Lofty, and Sturt could perceive,—at any rate could surmise,—that there was a fertile, happy land lying between him and them. But he had not the means nor had his men the strength to go across the country. He could not take his little whale-boat out to sea, nor could he venture to remain on the shores of Encounter Bay till assistance should come to him from seawards. He had flour and tea left, and birds and kangaroo might be killed on the river banks. So he resolved to go back again up the river, and thus with infinite labour he returned by the Murray and Murrumbidgee, and made his way to Sydney.

The results of this journey were twofold. Though Sturt did not discover the land in which the colony of South Australia was first founded, and on which the city of Adelaide now stands, the history of his journey and the account which had previously been given by Captain Flinders, led to the survey of the land between the two gulfs and the Murray River. There stands a hill, about twenty miles from Adelaide, called Mount Barker; in honour of Captain Barker, who was killed by the blacks while em-

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ployed on this work. The land was found to be good, and fit for agriculture; not sandy, as is so large a proportion of the continent, nor heavily timbered, as is a larger portion of it. The survey was made immediately on the receipt of Sturt's account, and the operations which were commenced with a view of planting the colony, were no doubt primarily due to him. And he solved the great question as to the Australian waters, proving, what all Australia now knows, to its infinite loss, that the river Murray,—the only considerable outflow of Australian waters with which we are as yet acquainted,—makes its way into the sea by a mouth which is not suited for navigation. There is already much traffic on the Murray, and no doubt that traffic will increase;—but there is very little traffic indeed from the Murray to the seaports, even on the Australian coast, and it is not probable that that little will be extended. It is yet possible that on the north or north-western coast navigable rivers may be found. Just now men who have visited the northern shore are beginning to tell us that the Roper River and the Victoria River may by certain processes of blasting and dredging become serviceable, not only for inland but also for maritime navigation. But hitherto Australia has had no river into which great ships can make their way, as they do on the open rivers of America, of Europe, and of Asia. The narrowness and shallowness,—or, as I may perhaps call it, the meanness,—of the mouth of the Murray is one of the great natural disadvantages under which Australia labours.

Tidings of the land between the Murray and the Gulfs came home, and then a company formed itself with the object of "planting" a colony, as British settlements were formerly planted in North America. The plan to be followed was that which came to be known as the Wakefield system, the theory of which required that the land should be sold in small quantities, at a "sufficient price," so that the purchasers should settle on their own lands, and hold no more land than they would be able to occupy beneficially for themselves and the colony at large. This theory of occupation was to be adopted in distinct opposition to that under which large grants of land had been made in Western

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Australia,—the territorial estates so granted having been far too extensive in area for beneficial occupation.

In establishing new homes for the crowded population of old lands it has been found almost impossible to follow out to any perfect success the theories of philanthropists. The greed of individuals on one side, and obstinacy and ambition on other sides, have marred those embryo Utopias in the prospect of which the brains of good men have revelled. Machinery, if the means and skill be sufficient, can be made to do its proposed work in exact conformity with the intentions of the projectors; but men are less reliable. They are, however, more powerful, each being the owner of a new energy; and though the Utopian philanthropist may be disappointed,—even to a broken heart,—the very greed and obstinacy of his followers will often lead to greater results than would have been achieved by a strict compliance with the rules of a leader, however wise, however humane, however disinterested he may have been. The scheme proposed for the colonization of South Australia was not carried out in strictness; but the colony is strong and healthy, and it may be doubted whether it would now be stronger or healthier had a closer compliance with the intentions of the founders been effected.

In 1834 an Act was passed for founding the colony of South Australia. Under this Act it was specially provided that the proceeds of the land should be devoted to immigration. This, however, was no necessary part of Mr. Gibbon Wakefield's plan. In his evidence given subsequently before a committee of the House of Commons in 1836, he thus speaks of his own scheme: "The object of the price is not to create an immigration fund. You may employ the fund in that way if you please, but the object of the price is to create circumstances in the colony which would render it, instead of a barbarous country, an extension of the old country, with all the good, but without the evils, of the old society. There is no relation,—it is easy to see one which is of no consequence, but I can see no proper relation,—between the price required for land and immigration." He repeats the same opinion in his book, called

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"A View of the Art of Colonization." This is written in the form of letters, and in Letter 55 he says: "So completely is the production of revenue a mere incident of the price of the land, that the price ought to be imposed, if it ought to be imposed under any circumstances, even though the purchase-money were thrown away." Again in the same letter he continues, speaking of the money which would arise from the sale of land: "It is an unappropriated fund which the state or government may dispose of as it pleases without injustice to anybody. If the fund were applied to paying off the public debt of the empire nobody could complain of injustice, because every colony as a whole, and the buyers of land in particular, would still enjoy all the intended and expected benefits of sufficient price upon new land. If the fund were thrown into the sea as it arrived, there would still be no injustice, and no reason against producing the fund in that way." This is a very strong way of putting it; but Mr. Wakefield meant to assert that the consideration of the use to which the fund arising from the sale of land might be applied, was no part of his plan. Let others decide as to that. He had seen that the grants of vast areas of land to men who had taken themselves out with a certain amount of capital and a certain number of fellow-emigrants, had not produced colonial success. There was the terrible example of Western Australia before him. The land was not occupied, and was not tilled. Each new-comer thought that he should have a share of the land, rather than that he should perform a share of the labour. I would not, however, have it supposed that I am an admirer generally either of Mr. Wakefield's system of colonization, as given in his book, or of his practice as carried out in New Zealand. He was right in maintaining that all land should be sold for a price so high as to prevent, at any rate for a time, the formation of large private estates in the hands of individuals, who would be powerless to use such estates when possessed. In almost all beyond that,—as in regard to his idea that English society, under the presidency of some great English magistrate, should be taken out to the young colony "with all

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the good, but without the evil,"—he is I think Utopian. Of his own doings as a colonizer I shall have to speak again in reference to New Zealand.

Mr. Wakefield's plan was by no means adopted as a whole by the Act of 1834, in conformity with which the new colony was to be founded. In 1831 an attempt had been made to obtain a charter for forming a company, by which the new colony was to be planted in strict accordance with Mr. Wakefield's principle. But this scheme broke down, and in 1834 the Act was passed. Under this Act it was provided that the land should be sold in small blocks, —no doubt at a "sufficient price,"—and that the money so realised should be applied to immigration. What the "sufficient price" should be Mr. Wakefield had never stated. Indeed it would then have been impossible, and is still equally impossible, that any price should be fixed as the value of a commodity, whose value varies in accordance with climate, position, and soil.

The impossibility of fixing a price for land, and yet the apparent necessity of doing so, has been the greatest difficulty felt in arranging the various schemes of Australian colonization. At first sight it may seem easy enough. Let the land be put up to auction, and let the purchaser fix the price. But when the work was commenced it was necessary to get new settlers on to the land, who knew nothing of its relative value, who could not tell whether they could afford to give 5*s.* or £5 an acre for it and then live upon it. These new-comers required to be instructed in all things, and in nothing more than as to the proper outlay of their small capitals. And the system of auction, when it did come to prevail in the sale of crown lands, was found to produce the grossest abuses,—I think I may say the vilest fraud. Men constituted themselves as land agents with the express purpose of exacting black mail from those who were really desirous of purchasing. "I will be your agent," such a one would say to the would-be purchaser. "I will buy the land for you, at a commission of a shilling an acre. You can buy it for yourself, you say. Then I shall bid against you." This system has prevailed to such an

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extent that the agency business has become an Australian profession, and men who did not want an acre of land have made fortunes by exacting tribute from those who were in earnest. As a rule, 20*s.* an acre has been the normal price fixed in these colonies generally,—though from that there have been various deviations. In South Australia proper, —that is in South Australia exclusive of the northern territory,—the Crown has never alienated an acre for less than 20*s.* an acre. Mr. Wakefield seems to have considered that 40*s.* an acre should have been demanded from the early settlers in the new colony,—but he would fix no sum, always adhering to his term of a "sufficient price."

The Act required that the money produced by the sale of lands should be employed in bringing immigrants into the country; but this requirement has not been fulfilled. A public debt was soon accumulated, and the colony decided that the proceeds of the land should be divided into three parts, —that a third should go to immigration, a third to the public works, and a third to the repayment of the public debt. But this arrangement has again gone to the wall, and the money produced is now so much revenue, and is like other revenue at the disposal of the House of Assembly. But the Act of 1834 enjoined also that no convicts should ever be sent to South Australia, and this enactment has never been infringed. It also decreed that, as soon as the population of the new colony should have reached 50,000, a constitution, with representative government, should be granted to it. This, too, was carried out with sufficient accuracy. At the close of 1849 the population was 52,904, and in 1850 the British Parliament conferred on the colonists the power of returning elected members to serve in the Legislative Council.

I should hardly interest my readers, if I were to dilate upon all the success and all the failures which the promoters of the South Australian plan encountered. But it is well that they should understand that there was a plan, and that the work was not done from hand to mouth,—that South Australia did not progress accidentally, and drift into free institutions, as was the case with the other Australian

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colonies. There was much both of success and of failure; but it may be said that the attempt was made in a true spirit of philanthropy, and that the result has been satisfactory if not at first triumphant. Mr. Wakefield, Mr. Hutt,—now Sir William Hutt,—Colonel Torrens, and Mr. Angas were chief among those to whom the colony is indebted for its foundation. The first vessels sent out were dispatched by the South Australian Company, of which Mr. Angas was the chairman. They arrived in 1836, but the new-comers knew nothing of the promised land before them. At the bottom of Gulf St. Vincent, lying off a toe of the land, as Sicily lies off from Italy, is Kangaroo Island. It is barren, covered with thick scrub, and deficient in water. No more unfortunate choice could have been made by young settlers. But here the first attempts were made, and here still linger a few descendants of the first pioneers, who live in primitive simplicity together. They have a town called Kingscote, on Nepean Bay. Mr. Sinnett, in his account of the colony, says that he was there in 1860-61, and that then there were about half-a-dozen houses, chiefly occupied by the descendants and connections of one old gentleman. Such was the fate of the earliest settlement formed by the South Australian Company.

But Nepean Bay was soon relinquished as the future home of the would-be happy colonists. Later in 1836 Colonel Light arrived, sent out as the surveyor-general by the government at home, and Captain Hindmarsh as the first governor of the new colony. There was still much difficulty before a site for the new town was chosen, and apparently much quarrelling. Adelaide, which was to be the earthly paradise of perfected human nature, was founded amidst loud recrimination and a sad display of bitter feeling;—but the site was chosen, and was chosen well, and the town was founded. Captain Hindmarsh, however, was recalled in 1838, as having failed in his mission, and Colonel Light died in 1839. Captain Hindmarsh was replaced by Colonel Gawler, who went to work with great energy in making roads and bridges,—and running the colony into debt over and above the funds on which it was empowered

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to draw. The colony was insolvent, and they who had advanced cash on bills drawn by the governor were for a while without their money. It seemed as though the great attempt would end in failure. The colony, with a revenue of only £30,000, had attained an annual expenditure of £150,000 and a public debt of £300,000.* Such was the condition of South Australia when Captain (now Sir George) Grey succeeded Colonel Gawler. Under his influence the expenditure was checked, and money was lent by the British Parliament. From that time forward the colony flourished. The debt was repaid, and Elysian happiness was initiated.

The real prosperity of South Australia commenced with the discovery of copper at the Burra mines in 1845. As I shall say something of the great wealth which has accrued to the colony from her copper in a following chapter, I will only remark here that as gold produced the success of Victoria, so did copper that of South Australia. But the gold in the former was very nearly ruinous to the success of the latter. In 1851 began the rush of diggers to the Victorian gold-fields, and so great was the attraction that for a time it seemed that the whole male population of South Australia was about to desert its home. I will again quote Mr. Sinnett: "Shipload after shipload of male emigrants continued to leave the port during many consecutive months, while thousands more walked or drove their teams overland; the little-trodden overland route becoming the scene of active traffic,—the principal camping-places being every night lighted up by the numerous camp-fires of parties of travellers. At the same time that the men went, the money went with them. The banks were drained of coin, and trade partially ceased. Scores of shops were closed, because the tradesmen had followed their customers to the diggings. The streets seemed to contain nothing but women; and strong feelings were entertained that no harvest would be sown, and that, allured by the more glittering attractions of the gold colony, the small landed proprietors, who formed so important a section of our society, would permanently remain away, selling their land here for whatever trifle it

* I take these figures from Mr. Sinnett's work.

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would fetch." This is a strongly drawn picture of the state of all Australian society at the time. There was one general rush to the gold-fields, and men for a time taught themselves to believe that no pursuit other than the pursuit of gold was worthy of a man's energies. South Australia had no gold-fields, and therefore the current of emigration was all away from her. For a time the gloom was great. But the runagates soon found that everything was not bright in the rich land,—and they returned to their homesteads, many of them with gold in their hands. Though there was great terror in the colony when the exodus was taking place, the opinion is now general that South Australia gained more in wealth than it lost by the discovery of the Victorian gold.

South Australia is at present possessed of a representative government,—as are all the other Australian colonies, except Western Australia. But during the early years of her existence she, as well as the others, was subject to government from our Colonial Office at home. There was from the first a feeling averse to this, which no doubt greatly assisted in producing the troubles by which the early governors were afflicted. They who had been instrumental in founding the colony were hearty Liberals, attached to religious freedom, altogether averse to Established Churches, and anxious for self-rule. For men coming out in such a spirit, but coming out nevertheless with the aid and furtherance of the home government, there were of course trials and crosses. They desired to rule themselves,—as the Pilgrim Fathers had done in Massachusetts. But the office in Downing Street would not relinquish its authority to colonists who might be visionary, and were certainly ambitious. On the other hand, men who were disposed to devote their time and fortunes to a system of philosophical colonisation were apt to feel that their scheme should not be made subject to the interference which a convict colony might probably require. There were troubles, and those two first governors, Captain Hindmarsh and Colonel Gawler, had hot work on their hands. Colonel Robe, who in 1845 succeeded Captain Grey as governor, and who as a military man felt that he was governing the colony on behalf of the

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Crown rather than on that of the colonists, gave great offence,—especially by providing State endowment for religion, a point as to which the founders of the colony had been particularly sensitive. But a good time was coming. When 50,000 inhabitants had settled themselves on the land, then would those inhabitants be entitled to govern themselves; and then any governor who might be sent to them from the old country would be no more than that appanage of royalty which serves as a binding link between the parent country and its offspring. Then they would make laws for themselves; then they would not have State endowment for clergymen more than for doctors or lawyers; then would their Elysium have truly been initiated.

The work of governing the colony had indeed been commenced with some little attempt at double government. There was a board of South Australian Commissioners in London, and when Captain Hindmarsh came out as governor, there was appointed a certain member of this Board to act as resident commissioner in Adelaide, and to report direct to the commissioners at home. Colonel Gawler and his successor, Captain Grey, held, however, the joint offices of governor and resident commissioner,—so that very little came of the arrangement as a check upon the power of Downing Street. In 1842 the office of resident commissioner was altogether abolished, and the Act of Parliament by which this was done provided for the appointment of a Legislative Council of eight, the whole of which, however, was to be nominated by the Crown. In 1850,—when the requisite population had been achieved, the colonists were allowed to elect two-thirds of the Legislative Council, the number of councillors being raised from eight to twenty-four. But this did not long satisfy the cravings of the people for self-government. In other Australian colonies,—especially in the neighbouring colony of Victoria,—demands for free constitutions were being made at the same time; and what colony could have a better right to be free than South Australia, established, as she had been, on philosophical and philanthropical principles?

The Council gave way to the people, and the governor

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gave way to the Council; but they did not at first give way enough. In 1853 they passed a bill,—subject to confirmation at home,—creating two houses of parliament, of which the Lower House,—to be called the House of Assembly,—should be elective. The members were to be elected for three years, subject of course to dissolution by the governor. But the members of the Legislative Council, to consist of twelve members, were to be appointed for life by the governor. It should be remembered by all who desire to study the form of government and legislative arrangement in these colonies, that members of the Upper House are nominated by the Crown,—and therefore, in fact, by the minister of the day,—in New South Wales and Queensland, but are elected by the people in Victoria and South Australia. In 1853, however, when the Council in South Australia was sitting, with the view of framing a new constitution for the colonies, the question was still unsettled as to any of these colonies. Queensland had not commenced her career. In New South Wales it had been decided that the existing Legislative Council should pass a constitution, but that it should be one under which the future Upper House of the colony should be nominated by the Crown; and an Act to this effect was passed accordingly on 21st December, 1853. No doubt the proposed action of the sister colony was well known and well discussed in Adelaide, the party of the government feeling that a constitution which was supposed to suit New South Wales might well suit South Australia; and the colonists themselves feeling that, however willing the old-fashioned people of New South Wales might be to subject themselves after the old-fashioned way to government nominations, such a legislative arrangement was by no means compatible with the theory of self-rule, under which they had come out to the new country. A petition against the bill was sent home,—a petition praying that the assent of the Crown, for which it had as a matter of course been reserved, might not be given to it. The petition was supposed to represent the feeling of the colony, and the bill was therefore sent back for reconsideration. The Legislative Council was dissolved, and a new

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Council elected and nominated,—with sixteen elected and eight nominated members. This Council was obedient to the will of the people, and passed the constitution which is now in force. The new Legislative Council was to be elective, and not nominated; and the governor was to be without the power of dissolving it. It was to consist of eighteen members, six of whom should retire every four years,—so that when the arrangement came to be in full force, as it is now, every member would have a seat for twelve years. The elections were to be made by the country at large. At each election any man possessed of the franchise for the Upper House would vote for any six candidates he pleased, and the six having the majority of votes would come in as returned by the entire colony. When speaking in a future chapter of the acting legislature of the colony, I will give my reasons for disapproving of this form of election. It was adopted, and, having the general approval of the colony, was confirmed by the Crown at home, and is now the law of the land. The second chamber was to consist, and still does consist, of thirty-six members, to be elected for three years each. An elector for the Council must possess a £50 freehold, or a leasehold of £20 per annum, or occupy a dwelling-house valued at £25 per annum. Manhood suffrage prevails in reference to electors for the Lower Chamber, it being simply requisite that the elector's name should have been six months on the roll, and that he shall be twenty-one. A member of the Council must be thirty-four years old, born a subject or naturalised, and a resident in the colony for three years. The qualification of a member for the Legislative Assembly is the same as that for an elector.

This constitution was proclaimed in the colony in October, 1856, and the first parliament elected under it commenced its work on April 22, 1857. Thus constitutional government and self-rule were established in South Australia. With such a parliament responsible ministers were, as a matter of course, a part of the system, and on 24th of October, 1856, five gentlemen undertook the government of the colony as chief secretary, attorney-general, treasurer,

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commissioner of crown lands and immigration, and commissioner of public works. From that day to the period of my visit to the colony,—April, 1872,—there had been no less than twenty-four sets of ministers; but the cabinet remained the same, with the five officers whom I have named.

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CHAPTER II.

ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE is a pleasant, prosperous town, standing on a fertile plain, about seven miles from the sea, with a line of hills called the Mount Lofty Range forming a background to it. On 31st December, 1871, the city proper contained 27,208 inhabitants, and the suburbs, so called, contained 34,474, making a total of 61,682 persons either living in the metropolis, or so closely in its neighbourhood as to show that they are concerned in the social and commercial activity of the city. On the same date the entire population of the colony was 189,018. Adelaide alone, therefore, contains very nearly a third of the life of the whole community of South Australia. This proportion of urban to rural population,—or I may perhaps better say of metropolitan to non-metropolitan,—is very much in excess of that which generally prevails in other parts of the world.

The same result has come of the immigration to the other great Australian colonies, though not quite to the same extent. The population of Melbourne and its suburbs up to the beginning of 1872 was 206,000, and that of the colony was 755,000. The population of Sydney and its suburbs was 136,000, and that of New South Wales 500,000. In each case the population of the one city with its suburbs is between a third and a fourth of that of the entire colony, and in each case the proportion of urban to rural population is unusually high.

It may, perhaps, be taken as a rule,—though a rule with very wide exceptions,—that the produce of a country comes

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from the industry of those who live out of the metropolis, and that they who live in the metropolis exercise their energies, and make or mar their fortunes, in the management of that produce. Politicians, lawyers, merchants, government officials, and even retail dealers, with the concourse of people who are got together with the object of providing for them, form a community which can hardly be said to be, itself, productive, though it gives to the products of a country very much of the value which they possess, and which they would not possess without such metropolitan arrangement. I do not know that any political economist has as yet cared to inquire what proportion of the population of a community should be metropolitan,—so that the affairs of the community might be ordered in the very best manner. Nor could such inquiry be made with any exact result, as the circumstances of countries and of towns vary very greatly; but the proportions of population as shown in the Australian cities above named cannot be taken as showing a healthy state of things. It goes towards proving that what we may perhaps call the pioneer immigration into these colonies has been checked,—a fact of which we have much other proof. The men who are here, and the men who come afresh, prefer the city, and eschew a life of agricultural labour. The nomadic race of miners will rush after tidings of gold, and will form communities of their own; but the fields of Australia, the vast territories of the continent which we would fain see bearing crops of wheat and Indian maize, as do the vast prairies of the central States of America, do not entice the population. It will be said, and said truly, that if a people can find a living in a city, with all their wants supplied to them by caterers near at hand, why should such a people encounter the hardships of the backwoods,—or bush, as it is called in Australia? Why should not a man stay in town, if he can live in town? We all feel that, as regards any individual man, the argument is good;—but we feel at the same time that cities without country to feed them cannot long be continued; and that a community with extensive means of management, and sparse powers of production, is like a human body without arms or legs.

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What is the use of the best stomach which nature ever gave to a man without the means of filling it?

It seems to be the case that immigrants coming to the colony stick too closely to the towns,—and are unwilling to encounter the rough chances of agricultural or pastoral life, as long as any means of living is open to them in the cities. The evil, if it be an evil, must cure itself as rural wages advance in proportion to city wages. In the meantime, it is worthy of remark,—and of speculation as to the causes of the fact,—that the city populations of Australia are excessive. As the excess in Adelaide is greater than elsewhere, I have raised the point while speaking of the capital of South Australia.

Perhaps no city, not even Philadelphia, has been laid out with a stronger purpose of regularity and order than has been shown in the founding and construction of Adelaide. Adelaide proper, as distinguished from North Adelaide,—which has been allowed to deviate somewhat from the good manner of the parent city,—stands in exact conformity with the points of the compass. The streets all run north and south, or east and west. There are five squares,—or open spaces so designated,—one in the centre, and the other four at certain fixed intervals. At the extremities of the town, on the northern, southern, eastern, and western sides there are four terraces. That, however, on the eastern side has been allowed to take a devious course, as the city to the south is longer than it is at the north. But there is a precise regularity even in this irregularity. This terrace on the map of the town takes the form of a flight of steps, for nothing so irregular as a sloping or diagonal line has been permitted in the arrangement of the streets. To me the Quaker-like simplicity of such urban construction never renders easy any practical conception of the topography. I find it quite as easy to lose my way in Philadelphia or Adelaide as I do in the old parts of Paris, or in the meandering lanes of such a city as Norwich. I forget which is north and which west, and what set of streets run at right angles to what other set. I never was able to find my way about Adelaide. But for a man with a compass in his pocket, a

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clear calculating brain, and a good memory, the thing must be very easy. The northern half of the town is the West End. About midway on the Northern Terrace is Government House, and opposite to it is the Adelaide Club. The Houses of Parliament are close, on the same terrace. King William Street, the High Street of the town, runs at right angles from the North Terrace to Victoria Square, which is the centre of the city. Here, in King William Street, is congregated the magnificence of Adelaide,—comprising the Town Hall, the Public Offices, the Post Office, and various banks, and many of the most money-making shops.

The one building in Adelaide on which the town most prides itself,—and of which at the same time the colony is half ashamed because of the expense,—is the Post Office. I was gratified by finding that the colonies generally were disposed to be splendid in their post-offices rather than in any other buildings,—for surely there is no other public building so useful. At Brisbane, when I was there, they were building a fine post-office. At Sydney they had nearly completed a magnificent post-office, of which I have spoken in its proper place. At Melbourne I found a very large post-office indeed,—though, as I thought, one not very convenient to the public. And here at Adelaide the Post Office is the grandest edifice in the town. It is really a beautiful building, with a large centre hall, such as we had in London as long as we could afford ourselves the luxury. We have built up our hall, compelled by exigencies of space and money,—compelled as I think by a shabby regard to space and money. It will be long before the authorities of Adelaide will be driven to perpetuate a similar architectural meanness,—for surely such a post-office will be more than ample for the population for many a year to come. I went over the building, and knowing something of post-offices, I regret to say that the arrangements might have been improved by consultation with English officials. As regarded the building as a building, it is a credit to Adelaide, and would be an ornament to any city in Europe. The government offices are not magnificent, — but are pleasant, commodious, and sufficient. The Town Hall is a fine room, and forms a por-

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tion of a very handsome building. In such luxuries as town-halls, large public concert-rooms, public ball-rooms, and the like, the Australian cities greatly beat our own. I do not say that there is any such an edifice on the Australian continent as St. George's Hall at Liverpool,—but then neither is there any town with half the number of inhabitants that Liverpool contains. Adelaide itself has less than 30,000, and I doubt whether there be any town in England with double that number which has such a chamber for public purposes as that of which I am speaking. I am sure there is none with four times the number that has a theatre so pretty, so well constructed, and so fit for its purpose as the Adelaide Theatre. Even little Perth with its 6,000 souls has a grand town-hall. In almost every municipality,—even in those of the suburbs of such a town as Adelaide,—halls are erected for public purposes, for speeches, balls, concerts, and the like. In this respect our children in Australia take after their cousins in the United States. In regard to banks also Adelaide flourishes greatly. I must not name any one in particular, lest it be thought that I am making return for accommodation given; but, such was their grandeur, that I felt of them generally that the banking profits in South Australia must be very great, or such edifices could not have been erected.

On the farther or southern side of the square are the Law Courts, as to which I was informed that that intended for the Supreme Court was not used as intended, being less convenient than an older building opposite to it. I did not go into either of them.

Adelaide is well provided with churches,—so much so that this speciality has been noticed ever since its first foundation. It was peculiarly the idea of those who formed the first mission to South Australia, that there should be no dominant Church;—that religious freedom should prevail in the new colony as it never had prevailed up to that time in any British settlement; and that the word dissent should have no meaning, as there should be nothing established from which to disagree. In spite of all this the Church of England has assumed a certain ascendency, partly from the

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fact that a liberal and worthy Englishwoman, now Lady Burdett-Coutts, endowed a bishopric at Adelaide; but chiefly from the indubitable fact that they of the Church of England who have flocked into the colony have been higher in wealth and intelligence than those of any other creed. It would be singular indeed had it not been so, seeing that the country from which they came had for centuries possessed an established and endowed Church. But the very fact that the Church of England boasted for itself even in this colony a kind of ascendency, and the other fact that the colony had been founded with the determination that there should be no ascendency, have together created great enmity among the rival sects. While I was in Adelaide a motion was before parliament,—as to which I heard the debate then in progress,—for taking away the right of precedency belonging by royal authority to the present bishop. Both Houses had passed a bill, with the purpose of taking away from the prelate the almost unmeaning privilege of precedence. It had been reserved by the governor, with undeniable propriety, for the decision of the government at home. The Secretary of State for the Colonies had returned a dispatch, intended to be most conciliatory, stating that the Crown would be happy to consider any proposition made by the colony, but that the legislature of the colony could not be permitted to annul the undoubted prerogative of the Crown to grant honours. But the matter was again argued as though a great injury had been inflicted. It was well understood by all men that in the event of a vacancy in the bishopric no successor would be appointed by the Crown; and that any future bishop,—appointed as he must be by a synod of the Church,—would have conferred on him by his appointment no privilege of walking out of any room before anybody else. But such is the feeling of the colony in regard to religious freedom, and such the feeling especially in the city of Adelaide, that a politician desirous of popularity felt, not without cause, that a stroke of political business might be done in this direction. Of all storms in a teacup, no storm could be more insignificant than this. That the present bishop, who has the good word of

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everybody, should be allowed to wear to the last the very unimportant honour conferred upon him, would have seemed to be a matter of course. He has, since, resigned the right. It was, however, thought worth while not only to fight the question, but to re-fight it. The matter is worthy of notice only as showing the feeling of the people on the subject. I may here remark that Adelaide has been called especially a city of churches, so strong has been the ambition of various sects to have it seen publicly that their efforts to obtain places of worship worthy of their religion have been as successful as those of their sister sects. The result has tended greatly to the decoration of the town. Among them all, the Church of England is, at the present moment, by no means the best represented. A cathedral, however, designed by Butterfield, is now rising as fast as its funds will permit.

All round the city there are reserved lands, of which I may best explain the nature to English readers by calling them parks for the people. These reserves are of various widths in different parts, but are full half a mile wide on an average. They are now being planted, and are devoted to air and recreation. I need hardly explain that they cannot as yet rival the beauty and the shade of our London parks: but that they will do so is already apparent to the eye. And they will have this advantage,—which, indeed, since the growth of the town towards the west belongs also to our London parks,—that they will be in the middle, not on the outside, of an inhabited city. As Adelaide increases in population, these "reserves" will be in the midst of the inhabitants. But they will have also this additional advantage,—which we in London do not as yet enjoy, in spite of efforts that have been made,—that they will not be a blessing only to one side or to one end of the city. They will run east and west, north and south, and will be within the reach of all Adelaide and her suburbs. There are here also public gardens,—as there are in every metropolis of the Australian colonies. The gardens of Adelaide cannot rival those of Sydney,—which, as far as my experience goes, are unrivalled in beauty anywhere. Nothing that London possesses, nothing that Paris has, nothing that New York has,

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comes near to them in loveliness. But, as regards Australian cities, those of Adelaide are next to the gardens of Sydney. In Melbourne the gardens are more scientific, but the world at large cares but little for science. In Sydney, the public gardens charm as poetry charms. At Adelaide, they please like a well-told tale. The gardens at Melbourne are as a long sermon from a great divine,—whose theology is unanswerable, but his language tedious.

I have said that the city has a background of hills called the Mount Lofty Range,—so called by Captain Flinders when he made his first survey. The only pretension to landscape beauty which the city possesses is derived from these mountains. It was indeed said many years ago by one much interested in Adelaide, that she was built on a "pretty stream." The "stream" is called the Torrens, after one of the founders of the colony, but I utterly deny the truth of the epithet attached to it. Anything in the guise of a river more ugly than the Torrens it would be impossible either to see or to describe. During eleven months of the year it is a dry and ugly channel,—retaining only the sewerwards property of a river. In this condition I saw it. During the other month it is, I was told, a torrent. But the hills around are very pretty, and afford lovely views and charming sites for villa residences, and soil and climate admirably suited for market gardens. As a consequence of this latter attribute Adelaide is well supplied with vegetables and fruit. By those who can afford to pay the price already demanded for special sites, beautiful nooks for suburban residences may still be obtained.

The city receives its water from an artificial dam constructed about eight miles from it, but the reservoir used when I was there had been deemed insufficient for the growing needs of the town. A larger dam, calculated to hold innumerable gallons, had been just finished as far as the earthworks were concerned, and was waiting to be filled by the winter rains. A tunnel had been made through the hillside for its supply,—so that it might water Adelaide and all her suburbs for generations to come. But generations come so quickly now, that for aught I can tell Adelaide

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may want a new dam and infinitely increased gallons before one generation has entirely passed away. If it be so, I do not doubt but that the new dam and all the gallons will be forthcoming. While speaking of water, I must acknowledge that during three months of the year water is a matter of vital consideration to the inhabitants of Adelaide. I was not there in December, January, or February; but from the admission of inhabitants,—of Adelaideans not too prone to admit anything against their town,—I learned that it can be very hot during those three months. I liked Adelaide much,—and I liked the Adelaideans; but I must confess to my opinion that it is about the hottest city in Australia south of the tropics. The heat, however, is not excessive for above three months. I arrived in the first week of April, and then the weather was delightful. I was informed that the great heats rarely commence before the second week in December. But when it is hot, it is very hot. Men and women sigh for 95 in the shade, as they, within the tropics, sigh for the temperate zones.

But in all respects such as that of water,—in regard to pavements, gas, and sewers, in regard to hospitals, lunatic asylums, institutions for the poor, and orphanages,—the cities of Australia stand high; and few are entitled to be ranked higher than Adelaide. I had an opportunity of seeing many of these institutions, including the gaol inside the city and the gaol outside; and I saw some of them under the auspices of one who was perhaps better entitled to judge of them than any other man in the colony. It seemed to me that they were only short of absolute excellence. When I remembered how small was the population, how short a time had elapsed since the place was a wilderness, how limited the means, how necessarily curtailed were the appliances at the command of what we should call such a handful of men,—and when I remembered also what I have seen in our own workhouses at home, what I have heard of some of our own gaols, what but a few years since prevailed in many of our own lunatic asylums,—I could not but think that the people of Adelaide had been very active and very beneficent. Of course every new town founded

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has the advantage of all the experience of every old town founded before it. It is easier for a new country, than for an old country, to get into good ways. No man has visited new countries with his eyes open without learning so much as that. But, not the less, when the observer sees 60,000 people in a new city, with more than all the appliances of humanity belonging to four times the number in old cities, he cannot refrain from bestowing his meed of admiration. I will now finish my remarks about this town with saying that no city in Australia gives one more fixedly the idea that Australian colonisation has been a success, than does the city of Adelaide.

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CHAPTER III.

LAND.

I HAVE said that Adelaide has been called a city of churches. It has also been nicknamed the Farinaceous City. A little gentle ridicule is no doubt intended to be conveyed by the word. The colony by the sister colonies is regarded as one devoted in a special manner to the production of flour. Men who spend their energy in the pursuit of gold consider the growing of wheat to be a poor employment. And again the squatters, or wool-producers of Australia, who are great men, with large flocks, and with acres of land at their command so enormous that they have to be counted, not by acres, but by square miles, look down from a very great height indeed upon the little agriculturists, —small men, who generally live from hand to mouth,—and whose original occupation of their holdings has commonly been supposed to be at variance with the squatters' interests. The agriculturists of Australia generally are free-selecters, men who have bought bits here and bits there off the squatters' runs, and have bought the best bits,—men, too, whose neighbourhood, for reasons explained before, has not been a source of comfort to the squatters generally. In this way agriculture generally, and especially the growing of wheat-crops for sale, has not been regarded in the colonies as it is certainly regarded at home. The farmers of South Australia are usually called "cockatoos,"—a name which prevails also, though less universally, in the other colonies. The word cockatoo in the farinaceous colony has become so common as almost to cease to carry with it the intended sarcasm. A man will tell you of himself that he is a

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cockatoo, and when doing so will probably feel some justifiable pride in the freehold possession of his acres. But the name has been given as a reproach, and in truth it has been and is deserved. It signifies that the man does not really till his land, but only scratches it as the bird does.

Nevertheless,—and in spite of any gibes conveyed in the words farinaceous, cockatoo, or free-selecter,—South Australia is especially blessed in being the one great wheat-producing province among the Australian colonies. The harvest of 1870-71,—which was, no doubt, specially productive, but is quoted here because it is the last as to which, as I write, I can obtain the statistics,—gave 6,961,164 bushels of wheat, which at 5*s.* 3*d.* a bushel, the price at which it was sold in Adelaide, produced £1,827,305. In the same year, that is, up to 31st December, 1871, which would take the disposal of the crop above mentioned,—for wheat, it must be remembered, in Australia is garnered in our spring, and not in our autumn,—104,000 tons of bread-stuff were exported, and sold for £1,253,342. So that the colony consumed not a third of the breadstuffs which it produced. The population of the colony up to 31st December, 1871, was 189,018 persons. So that the value of the breadstuffs exported in that year was something over £6 12*s.* 6*d.* a head for every man, woman, and child within it. With such a result, South Australia need not be ashamed of being called farinaceous.

It must not, however, be supposed that the year above quoted shows a fair average. The following table will give the amount of wheat produced, with the area from which it was produced, the average crop per acre, and the value per bushel, together with the amount of breadstuff and grain exported for the year above named, and the four preceding years :—

WHEAT PRODUCED.		AREA UNDER WHEAT.		AVERAGE CROP PER ACRE.	
Year.	Bushels.	Year.	Acres.	Year.	Bsh. lb.
1866-7	6,561,451	1866-7	457,628	1866-7	14 20
1867-8	2,579,894	1867-8	550,456	1867-8	4 40
1868-9	5,173,970	1868-9	533,035	1868-9	9 42
1869-70 ..	3,052,320	1869-70	532,135	1869-70	5 45
1870-71 ..	6,961,164	1870-71	604,761	1870-71	11 30

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VALUE PER BUSHEL.		
Year.	s.	d.
1866-7	4	5
1867-8	7	1
1868-9	5	0
1869-70	5	3
1870-71	5	0

VALUE OF BREAD-STUFFS AND GRAIN EXPORTED.	
Year.	
1867	£1,037,085
1868	568,491
1869	890,343
1870	470,828
1871	1,254,444

In the following year, 1871-72, the decrease of production was very great. There were 692,508 acres under wheat-crops in the colony. The produce was only 3,967,079 bushels, and the average produce per acre 5 bush. 44 lbs. What was the amount of wheat exported up to the end of 1872 I am unable to say. In reference to the above table, I must call attention to the fact that the exported articles of which the value is given are not only breadstuffs, but breadstuffs and grain, and the sums named as their value are, therefore, in excess of the real value of the wheat. But the other grain exported is very little. In the year 1871 the total value of the agricultural exports was £1,254,444, whereas the value of the breadstuffs was £1,253,342, leaving the value of all other grain at £1,102. The amount is not sufficient materially to affect the comparison made in the above table. Of this wealth of wheat sent away from South Australia, the other Australasian colonies, including New Zealand, consume the greatest quantity, New South Wales being the best customer. In 1867, when the average produce of the last harvest had exceeded fourteen bushels to the acre, Great Britain was the largest buyer. The price realised was only 4*s.* 5*d.* a bushel, and it was worth while to send it home;—but, generally, South Australia is the granary of the colonies around her. She sends supplies also, small indeed in amount, to Cape Town, the Mauritius, and New Caledonia, and even to India and the ports of China.

So far I have ventured to say what South Australia does in producing wheat, but I dare not venture to say what she might do. English farmers will not think much of a system of farming which does not produce an average crop of above ten bushels to the acre,—nor will they think much of an

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average price of 5*s.* 4*d.* a bushel. The English farmer could hardly pay his rent, and manure and crop his land, and get in his harvest and take it to market, with a total gross result of £2 13*s.* 4*d.* an acre,—more especially as he would only repeat his wheat-crop once in every four years. The answer to this is, of course, that the circumstances of the farmer in the two countries are very different. In South Australia the farmer pays no rent, does not manure his land, pays but little wages either for getting his crop in or out of the land, and grows wheat every year, instead of once in four years. The operations of the two men are distinctly different, and must continue to be different. But it may be well worth while to inquire whether the South Australian farmer might not learn a lesson in his business which would greatly increase his profits.

There can, I think, be no doubt that the cockatoo of South Australia is a very bad farmer,—and that he is so because he has hitherto been able to make a living by bad farming. With reference to the amount of produce, it must be admitted at once that the existing combination of soil and climate in the colony, though it has shown itself to be favourable to the growth of wheat in a country of vast area, is not only unfavourable to heavy crops, but is prohibitory in regard to a high average. Every now and then an average produce of fourteen bushels to the acre may be obtained, as in 1864 and 1867,—and there are districts in the colony in which the produce has on such years exceeded twenty bushels to the acre. In 1867 the average in the Robe district was twenty-three bushels to the acre. But there are, at any rate at present, sources of injury to the wheat crop which make the business of farming very precarious. In one year the red dust will almost destroy the crop, in another year,—as happened during the harvest-time of 1872,—the year last past,—a cloud of locusts will come and eat up wheat and grass throughout the country. That the red rust might be conquered by skill in farming at some future time is probable. And it is not impossible that altered circumstances of soil and climate, produced by population and cultivation, may be unfavourable to the

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locusts. With the drawbacks as they at present exist, the average produce of wheat must continue to be small. But it might probably be very much higher than it is.

Nearly two-thirds of all the cultivated land of the colony are under wheat every year. In 1870-71 there were 959,000 acres under cultivation in the colony; of these, 200,000 acres were under crops other than wheat; 154,000 were fallow, or laid down with artificial grasses; and 605,000 were under wheat. So that every acre of cultivated land is expected to bear wheat twice in three years. With us the best approved rotation of crops requires the land to give wheat only once in four years. But in fact the expectation and practice of the regular cockatoo farmer demands a crop of wheat every year from his land. The figures above given include, of course, cultivated land of all kinds,—and in all hands. There are agriculturists in South Australia who are endeavouring to give the soil a chance of being permanently productive, and who sow wheat at any rate not more than every other year. There are, too, growers of vines, of potatoes, and hay,—all of whom add their quota to the total of cultivated acres, and deduct materially from the favourable side of the above figures. The ordinary cockatoo knows nothing of the word fallow, and attempts to produce nothing but wheat. Year after year he puts in his seed upon the same acreage, and year after year he takes off his crop. He is the owner of a section of land which may be something between one hundred and two hundred acres,—which is his own, though he has not probably as yet paid for it the entire price. He does his work without any attempt to collect manure, or to give back to the land anything in return for that which he takes from it. He even burns the stubble from his field, finding it to be easier to do so than to collect it, that it may rot, and then be ploughed in. He ploughs his land, sows it, and then takes off his crop by a machine called a stripper, which as it passes over the land drags the corn out of the ear, leaving all the straw on the ground;—so that the corn is, as it were, threshed as it is taken off the ground. His labour, therefore, is very small. This last manipulation of the grain,—which

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would be impossible in England, where the climate demands that the grain should become dry before it can be taken from the ear,—is made practicable in South Australia by the great heat prevailing when the wheat is cut. The effect of all this is deleterious both to the man and to the land. The man has but one farming occupation,—that of growing wheat. He ploughs, and reaps, and sells; and ploughs, and reaps, and sells again. He employs his energies on the one occupation, with no diversification of interest, and with nothing to arouse his intelligence. Consequently the South Australian cockatoo is not a pushing or a lively man,—though it should be acknowledged on his behalf that he is orderly, industrious, and self-supporting. But the effect on the land is worse than that on the man,—for the land clearly deteriorates from day to day. No practical farmer will require figures to make him believe that it is so;—but the figures show it. The yield of wheat in South Australia has always been poor, but it has greatly fallen off. In six years, from 1860-61 to 1865-66, it averaged about twelve bushels an acre, and in the six subsequent years it averaged only nine bushels an acre.

The farmer usually owns the land. The system of tenant-farming is by no means unknown in the colony, but it is not popular either with tenant or landlord. The landlord obtains none of those side-wind advantages from his position as owner,—advantages over and above the rent,—which are so valued in the possession and are so dear to the imagination among ourselves. There is neither political power nor political prestige attached to such ownership. It has no peculiar grace of its own as it has with us. The privileges of a squirearchy are quite unknown in the colonies, or, if they exist at all, belong to great graziers and squatters,—or to men who hold large tracts of land in their own hands, and not to those who let their acres. There are game laws,—for the protection of birds in the close season,—but there are no game laws on behalf of the landowner. There is nothing picturesque attaching to the receipt of rural rents, no audit dinners, no dependency grateful alike to the landlord and to the tenant, no feeling that broad acres confer a

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wide respect. What percentage can a man get for his money if he let land to farmers, and what security will he have for his income? Those are the considerations, and those only, which bear upon the question. As well as I could learn details on the subject,—as to which no accurate information can be obtained because the arrangement is not sufficiently general to produce it,—a landlord may let cleared and enclosed land, worth for sale in the market about £6 an acre, for 10s. an acre;—and he may thus obtain, if he get his rent, something more than nine per cent. for his money. This would do very well as a speculation, if he were sure or nearly sure to get it, as are our landlords at home. But when bad years come the tenants do not pay. It is regarded almost as a matter of course that the payment of agricultural rents is to depend on the season. If the land refuse her increase, why is the loss to fall on the tenant harder than on the owner? The owner, no doubt, has the law on his side; but the tenant understands very well that when the land is barren, the law will be barren also. Unless his rent be remitted in such years, or at least in part remitted, he simply gives up his holding and goes elsewhere,—with his children and his plough, or without his plough if the landlord or other creditor should have seized it. The result is that the landlord is satisfied to remit half the rent in bad years; and the whole rent in very bad years. The further and final result is that the system of letting land to tenant farmers is unpalatable and unprofitable,—and therefore unusual.

The farmer therefore owns the land. He has bought it probably on credit, beginning simply with savings made from two or three years of labour, and owing the price, or the greater part of it, to the government. I will presently say a word as to the system of deferred payments for land which prevails. His homestead is too frequently bare and ugly, without garden or orchard or anything like an English farmyard around it; but it is substantial, and it is his own. The price of the land has probably been something between 20s. and 40s. an acre,—and he calculates that by growing wheat under the existing agricultural circumstances around him, he

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can live, and bring up his family, and free himself from his debt within ten years. If he be steady and industrious he can do so,—and he does do so. He does not confine his industry to his own farm; but in shearing-time he shears for some large squatter, or he keeps a team of bullocks and brings down wool to the railway station or to the city, or perhaps he takes a month's work at some gold-digging,—for even in South Australia there are gold-fields, though they be not prominent among the resources of the colony. In this way he lives and is independent;—and who will dare to find fault with a man who does live, and becomes independent, and makes a property exclusively by his own industry? His life is not picturesque, but he cares nothing for that. His children go to the public school,—at which he pays perhaps 2*s.* a week for three of them,—and they have plenty to eat and drink. His wife has plenty to eat and drink, and has a decent gown, and material comforts around her. He has plenty to eat and drink, and a decent coat if he cares for it. And he is nobody's servant. Nevertheless he is a very bad farmer, and unless he mend his ways soon the land which he now ploughs will cease to give him the plenty which he desires. It may not improbably come to pass that a considerable portion of the land occupied by farmers for the purpose of growing wheat, will, under the present system, cease altogether to give sufficient increase on the seed to pay even for the labour of ploughing and reaping. In that case it will go back to pastoral purposes and the farmer will remove elsewhere,—as has already happened in certain districts of the colony. But, though the area is immense, the area which will produce wheat is limited; and thus the well-being of South Australia may be much affected, unless a less wasteful use be made of the land.

The laws under which land has been sold in South Australia have been altered frequently,—as has been the case in all the colonies. The free-selecter, of whom I have been speaking, probably bought his land from the Crown at some price varying from 20*s.* to 40*s.* an acre, and was allowed four years,—or latterly five years,—to pay the sum, being charged interest at the rate of five per cent. Before entering

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upon his land he had only to pay one year's interest in advance. He has thus been enabled to buy his land with money produced by the crops he has grown. In other words, he has paid simply a rent for a term of years, and at the end of that term the land has become his own. And this system, though never as far as I am aware clearly expressed in words, seems to have been the ruling policy as to the alienation of agricultural land in all the Australian colonies. If the new settler will come and live upon the land, will till it and fence it, and pay for its use, during a sufficient time to prove that he is in earnest as to the use of it, the land shall be his. The idea of drawing from the land the funds required for government, so that taxation should be unnecessary, which was once dear to the minds of many colonists, has gradually faded away. Great as has been the possession of the land, it has not been a source of wealth available for any such purpose. If only it could be used to attract serviceable immigrants, if only it could be equitably distributed among men who would really use it,—not take it for the purpose of bargaining and gambling with it,—if only it could be converted into homes for people who would accept such homes and thus become a nation, the land would then have done all that it should be expected to do. This seems to have been the real gist of Mr. Wakefield's scheme, and to this theory all the land ministers of the various colonies have been tending; though, as it seems, their progress thitherwards has for the most part been an unconscious progress. But in this attempt to bestow the land there has still been the necessity of exacting Mr. Wakefield's "sufficient price." The land, if absolutely given, would be worthless. If it were to be had for nothing, it would be worth nothing. There must be a price upon it such as shall in some degree fix its value, and induce settlers to use with some economy and discretion that which can only be obtained for a stipulated sum of money. But the fund so raised has never been a source of wealth to a colony, and the colonies now cease to look for wealth in that direction. If the money raised will suffice to pay for surveys, to make roads, in any way to prepare the land for those who are to come and take

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it, all will be done that should be expected. "For a term of years you shall pay the colony such a rental as will enable the colony to make its land serviceable to you;—and then it shall be yours." Such, in fact, are the terms offered to free-selecters.

When I was in South Australia a new land bill was under the consideration of parliament,—as, indeed, I found new land bills either just in operation or under consideration wherever I went in the colonies. The matter has been one which has required many changes, and as to which no two colonies have been able to agree. As I think it probable that the bill proposed to the South Australian parliament will become law, I will endeavour to explain that instead of referring in detail to the law existing at this moment;—premising that here, in this chapter, it is my purpose to refer to the proposed measure only as far as it relates to the sale of lands to intending farmers, or free-selecters.

I must first explain that South Australia is a country peculiarly subject to drought,—more so than are the other colonies,—and is especially so subject in the interior. This is a fact so well acknowledged, that all who know the colony are aware that wheat can only be grown in certain parts of it. In order that the government might have some guide to tell it what portions of the land it would be expedient to throw open to agriculturists, and from what portions it would be expedient to exclude them as being unfit for agricultural purposes, a line has been drawn. The surveyor-general, Mr. Goyder, has drawn an arbitrary line across the map of South Australia, which is now known as Goyder's line of rainfall. It is anything but a straight line. It runs from a point on the eastern confines of the colony somewhat south of the city of Adelaide, in a direction north-west nearly as high as to the top of Spencer's Gulf. Then with irregular curves it comes south half way down the Gulf, which it crosses below Moonta and Wallaroo, and then runs north by east till it loses itself in unknown deserts. North of this line, or rather beyond it, no farmer should locate himself. South of this, or within it, he may expect sufficient rain to produce wheat. Of course Mr. Goyder gives no guarantee

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as to precise accuracy, but I found it to be admitted in the colony that the line had been drawn with skill and truth. North again of the dry and rainless region is a tropical country, which is subject to the usual conditions of tropical latitudes;—but on that Mr. Goyder's line has no bearing, and of that district I shall not speak in attempting to describe the agricultural condition of South Australia as now existing. All land within Goyder's line not hitherto sold, will, by the proposed law, which is called the "Waste Land Alienation Act," be opened to purchase, and on that land would-be farmers in South Australia are invited to locate themselves. The lands will be thrown open to selection, and will be purchasable on a credit of sixteen years, at an interest which is computed to amount to 3¾ per cent. per annum for that term. The settlement of the price to be paid will be in this wise:—The government will fix the upset price of all the areas offered for sale at what is supposed to be the present maximum value of the best land in the area,—which, for the sake of illustration, we may call £2 an acre. I was informed that £2 an acre is in fact the price at which the majority of the land will probably be first offered. It will then be in the power of any would-be purchaser to take it at that price. If there be no such purchaser, the commissioner of lands will, on the part of the government, reduce his demand by 5*s.* to 35*s.*, and then to 30*s.*, then to 25*s.*, and if necessary to 20*s.*,—at intervals of perhaps a fortnight. Below 20*s.* an acre the price will not be reduced. According to the nature of the land will be the desire of purchasers to buy it at 40*s.*; or to wait till it be offered at 30*s.* or at 20*s.* It is impossible not to see that even this plan is open to the machinations of "land agents;"—land sharks, I have heard them sometimes uncourteously called. The land agent, whose special business it is to know who are disposed to buy this or that section of land, will offer to renounce his own intention of buying, we will say at 30*s.*, on receiving 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* an acre on completing the purchase for his victim at 25*s.* The victim will feel himself obliged to pay the black-mail, as hundreds of victims have done, and the land shark,—I hope he will excuse my discourtesy,—will receive

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a very large payment, for which he will perform no service whatever.

And the payment of the money is to be arranged in this wise. On making his application for the land, at any fixed price,—say 30*s.* an acre,—the applicant will pay into the Treasury 10*s.* per cent. on the whole purchase-money. Presuming the land in question to be 200 acres in extent, the price would be £300, and he would pay down £30 as interest in advance for three years;—and would then be allowed to go in upon the land, and occupy it. He must effect certain improvements, and cultivate a certain portion, and must either live on it himself or by deputy. If he have not done so at the end of three years, he forfeits his £30. If he have done so, he pays another £30, and goes on for another three years. These payments are in place of interest, so that at the end of the six years he will have paid no part of the principal. He may then pay the whole principal, if he has it, and the land will be his; or he may postpone the payment for ten years, paying 2*s.* each year for each pound of the purchase-money, with interest at the rate of 4 per cent. for the further credit given. The payment for these last ten years would average something under £40 per annum, but would recur yearly. The purchaser of the 200 acres would thus pay £30 as advance rent on entrance; £30 again as advanced rent after three years; a rental of £40 a year annually for ten years further; and then the freehold would be his own.

The selecter may buy under this bill any amount from 1 acre up to 640 acres;—but in cases in which the land lies untowardly for division into exactly 640 acres, he may select as much as 700. If he should attempt to select more, to make applications in other names, or to defraud the land commissioner as land commissioners have been defrauded in all the colonies since the alienation of public lands commenced, terrible is to be the example made of that would-be free-selecter. All the money advanced by him for first payment or payments will be forfeited to the Crown.

The new land bill which I have attempted to describe does not vary very much from that now in operation. Its chief objects are, perhaps, to extend the area of land opened

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for selection, and to obviate the existing necessity of personal residence. No doubt the proposed terms are somewhat easier than the present to the proposed selecter. I think, however, it is obvious that the terms offered are such as should be attractive to men with small capitals, who are able to work with their own hands. To such I say again, that the South Australian "cockatoo," though he be a cockatoo, is an independent man, living on his own freehold in plenty, and knowing no master.

On the other hand, I would not advise farmers to try South Australia with the intention of having their work done for them by paid labourers. Wheat at 5*s.* 4*d.* a bushel will not pay for labour at the rate of 22*s.* a week, which may be quoted as about the rate at which rural labour may be obtained. When it is wanted throughout the year, as it would be wanted by any grower of wheat intending to farm his land as land is farmed at home, the labourer is paid about £40 per annum, and also receives his diet, which is worth to the farmer about £18 per annum, making a total of £58 per annum. Twenty-two shillings a week throughout the year amounts to £57 15*s.* per annum. No doubt the South Australian free-selecter does pay something in wages during his harvest, unless he be specially blessed in the matter of sons who can work; but he pays wages at no other time, and then the demand is higher,—rising probably to 5*s.* a day, or 4*s.* with diet. For this expenditure he provides himself by wages earned by himself in the manner I have already explained.

In writing of the agricultural products of South Australia, I should be wrong not to mention the vineyards of the colony. On 31st December, 1871, there were 5,823 acres under vines, which during that year had produced 896,000 gallons of wine, being at the rate of 154 gallons to the acre. I was informed that South Australia produces more wine than any other colony, but have no figures by me which would enable me to test the accuracy of the information. There can be no doubt that the climate is admirably suited for the growth of the grape, but the cultivation of it has not hitherto proved to be remunerative. It seems, indeed, to be retrograding. In the year ended 31st March, 1871, there

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were 6,127 acres bearing vines. In the subsequent year the number had been reduced to 5,823,—from which it appears that 304 acres of vineyard had been grubbed up.

I cannot say that I liked the South Australian wines. They seemed to me to be heady, and were certainly unpalatable. I came across none that I thought comparable to the Victorian wine of the country made at Yering. I was told that I was prejudiced, and that my taste had been formed on brandied wines, suited to the English market. It may be so;—but, if so, the brandied wines suited to the English market not only suit my palate, but do not seem to threaten that a second or third glass will make me tipsy. The South Australian wines had a heaviness about them,—which made me afraid of them even when I would have willingly sacrificed my palate to please a host.

It must, however, be borne in mind that the making of wine is an art which, as far as we know, has not been learned quickly in any country. The perfection to which Spanish, German, and French wines are now brought, has probably come as much from observation and experience as from the peculiarity of soils or climate. There are many who believe that Italian, Greek, and Hungarian wines will soon rival those of France. If so, the wines of Australia and the United States will probably do the same, when the cultivation and manufacture shall have been long enough in existence for experience and skill to have been created.

In the meantime the one thing desirable in reference to Australian wines, is that the people of the country should drink the produce of the country, not only because it is wholesome, but also because it is cheap. The usual drink now consumed at public-houses is brandy,—so called,—which is a villanous, vitriolic, biting compound of deadly intoxicating qualities, and is sold at *6d.* the glass. Though I found the South Australian wine to be "heady,"—drinking it after the fashion in which wine is drunk,—it is a beverage absolutely innocent in comparison with the spirits which the publicans sell; and it can be sold with profit at *2d.* a glass,—the glass being a small, false-bottomed tumbler, about as big as an ordinary claret-glass at home. The wine can be sold by the grower fit for use at *2s. 6d.* a gallon, and the

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gallon in the hands of the publican would run to twenty-five "nobblers" of wine. This would give a profit satisfactory, we may suppose, even to an Australian publican. A nobbler is the proper colonial phrase for a drink at a public-house. It would be very desirable that the men of the country should acquire a taste for drinking their own produce. As men have done so in all vine-growing countries, they will probably do so in South Australia, and when that time shall come the growing of grapes will be profitable.

Already the acreage under vines is very large. It must be remembered that grape-growing,—as is also hop-growing,—is an agricultural pursuit requiring great capital, and that the produce from the acre is very large. A grower with a hundred acres of vines on his hands has probably as great a stake in his vineyard as a farmer with a thousand acres of wheat has in his farm. In South Australia the acreage under vines exceeded that devoted to gardens, orchards, potatoes, lucerne, or artificial grasses. I annex a table, showing the number of acres under cultivation in South Australia in the year ended 31st March, 1871, with the number devoted to each class of growth,—premising with reference to the second mention of wheat, that cereals throughout all the colonies are grown for forage for cattle. They are cut green, and made into hay, and then stacked.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA, YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1871.

Total average under cultivation ..... 957,482 acres.

	Acres.		Acres.
Wheat	604,400	Permanent artificial grasses	3,712
Barley	22,474	Flax	182
Oats	6,184	Potatoes	3,370
Peas	3,713	Orchards	2,762
Hay	139,807	Gardens	4,330
Wheat, cut green for forage	2,598	Vines	6,127
Lucerne	3,441	Other crops	816
		Fallow land	153,566

The proportion of wheat to that of any other crop grown,—which is so great as to make all the other cereals sink into utter insignificance,—shows very plainly what the South Australian farmer regards as his special business.

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CHAPTER IV.

WOOL.

WHATEVER interests may for the moment be uppermost in the thoughts and words of Australian legislators and speculators, wool still remains and for many years will remain the staple produce of the country at large. In Victoria, indeed, wool is for the present second to gold. And in South Australia wool is second to wheat. The wheat grown in South Australia during eleven years up to 1871 has fetched an average of £1,283,630 per annum, whereas the wool exported from the colony,—in which is included a small amount exported from South Australian ports but grown in other colonies,—has fetched an average of £987,194 per annum. The wool produced has, in fact, been worth no more than three-fourths of the wheat grown. But the produce of a country which is exported always receives more attention than that which is consumed at home. Who thinks anything of the eggs that are laid around us, or of the butter made? In calculating the wealth of the country, who reckons up the stitching of all the women, or even the ploughing and hedging and ditching of the men? The calico and cutlery and cloth which we export, and the ships which take these things away, are to our eyes the source of our commercial wealth. I remember being told in America that in the year before the war the hay produced in the single State of Maine had been worth more than all the cotton exported from all the cotton States in that year. South Australia is perhaps in a safer condition than any other of the Australian colonies, because she can feed her-

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self. But not the less on this account does she regard wool as the staple of the country. It is the business of Australia to supply fine wools to the world, and South Australia thinks that she performs her part of that business very well. South Australian farmers simply live comfortably and die in obscurity by growing wheat; but South Australian squatters make splendid fortunes or are ruined magnificently by growing wool.

In the last two years things have been going well with the wool-growers; but for some years before that things were not going well, and there was much magnificent ruin. Owing to the drought to which the country is subject, and to the very limited rainfall in the large northern pastoral districts, squatting,—which is always precarious,—is perhaps more precarious in this colony than in others. In 1865 there was a great drought. In 1864 very little rain fell in the districts north of Goyder's line, and in 1865 none fell. When 1866 came many of the South Australian squatters were ruined,—and others were broken-hearted. The records of this time are terrible to hear. It was not so much that sheep were perishing from want of water. The wells did not run dry, and in that district no squatter trusts to surface water for his sheep to drink. But there was not a blade of grass, and the animals were starved. The owners did not know in what direction to stir themselves. Hundreds of thousands of sheep were driven south in order that they might find pasturage as they wandered. It must be understood that a squatter may drive sheep anywhere over unpurchased land,—that is, over land which is simply leased by other squatters from the Crown. But he is bound to give notice of the coming of his flocks, and to move them along at the rate of not less than six miles a day. It has not been an uncommon thing in any of the colonies for small squatters, when short of grass, to have their sheep driven about over hundreds of miles,—say in a wide-spread circle, so that at last they should be brought home again,—in order that thus they might be fed. In ordinary years this is not regarded as a thoroughly honest kind of grazing. It is difficult to prevent the usage, as the owner, though he must give notice of the

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coming of his sheep, is not bound to explain why they are on the road. They may have been sold and be travelling to the purchaser, or they may have been sent out for sale. But though the practice cannot be stopped, it is known and understood, and the large squatters who are the sufferers are often indignant. But in 1865-66 the larger the flocks were, the more urgent was the necessity which compelled the owner of them to send them forth, lest they should be starved at home. Mob after mob of wretched animals streamed down from the then barren plains, 300 miles north of Adelaide, to the southern districts near the sea and round the lakes,—perishing by the way, or doomed to perish when they got there. Those who started first,—whose owners, either by themselves or their servants, had been the first to see the necessity of going,—were saved. I heard one squatter's overseer tell how he had taken some 10,000 sheep down to the sea-side and brought them all back again. When I suggested to him, before his tale was at an end, that he had lost many of them,—I had heard more then of what had been lost than of any that were saved,—he answered me with indignant denial. He at that time had been a hero. But there were few such heroes. As the mobs followed, one upon the heels of another, the grass disappeared before them. They were driven hither and thither, till they died; but there was no grass. And it is easy to conceive the sort of welcome which these intruders would receive at such a time,—how the shepherds would be desired to move on, and do their six miles a day whatever might become of them afterwards, how hated they would be, coming with their flocks like locusts upon a country that was bare enough at that time even without such strangers! And the life of those who followed their flocks week after week and month after month could not itself have been very pleasant. Among Australian graziers young men are accustomed to this work. It is no uncommon thing that a flock of sheep,—they call them mobs in Australia,—perhaps four or five thousand strong, should have to travel six hundred miles, either being brought home by a purchaser or taken to some city for sale. There must be necessarily five or six men to

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accompany them, with seven or eight horses, and probably a cart. They kill their own meat as they go; but they carry their flour and tea, and perhaps a tent. They enter no houses and spend little or no money. They travel on their six miles a day;—and though their work be very tedious, it is endurable as long as each day's work is a portion of a successful commercial operation. But at this terrible time there was no idea of commerce. As they went along, the country was strewed with the bodies of the useless animals, and the only effort was to move on in some district giving still sufficient grass to keep the flock alive. Thousands were slaughtered to reduce the numbers in the scanty herbage, and I heard of one flock-owner who at last adopted the course of drowning a thousand in the sea. In Adelaide a large flock was offered to a merchant, who was also a squatter, at 1*s.* a head. He offered 6*d.* for them, and rejoiced afterwards that his bidding was not taken. At that time sheep were simply an encumbrance. There was imposed on each owner the duty of trying to save his property, but without the hope that he should succeed in doing so. It was a bad time then, in South Australia, for in the same year,—the season of 1865-66,—the wheat crop was also low. But the price of wool was high;—and therefore, though many squatters fell,—they who were already weak on their legs or in debt,—the strong men won their way through, and survived their losses.

After that came a great depression in the price of wool, and the colony was again at a low ebb. In March, 1866, unwashed South Australian wool fetched 1*s.* 2½*d.* a pound. In March, 1869, it fetched 8*d.* In looking at the difference between these times, the reader must remember that the squatters' liabilities were the same with the low price as they had been with the high. The normal squatter generally owes money to his banker or merchant, for which he pays some rate of interest varying from 8 to 11 per cent.,—and not unfrequently a percentage even higher than that. I have endeavoured in the former volume to explain his condition in this respect. With unwashed wool at 1*s.* 2*d.* or 1*s.* 3*d.* a pound not only will his interest not trouble him,

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but his debt will diminish apparently without any effort on his own part. But with wool at 8*d.* his debt, if it be at all heavy, will grow. The sum he realises from his wool will not pay the expenses of his men, keep himself, and pay his interest. After a year or two with such a result the merchant will feel that he is becoming insecure and will foreclose. Then the squatter is no longer a squatter, but takes probably to the care of sheep for some more fortunate man. In March, 1869, 8*d.* a pound was the price for unwashed or greasy South Australian wool; in 1870 it was 8½*d.*; in February, 1870, it was again 8*d.* These had been three bad years, and many men were either ruined or on the brink of ruin; but in July, 1871, it had risen to 11*d.* a pound; in September, 1871, to 1*s.* 0½*d.*; and in March, 1872, it was as high as 1*s.* 2*d.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* Twenty thousand sheep is by no means a large flock. On the contrary a squatter with no more than 20,000 is a small man. But a difference of 6*d.* in the pound on unwashed wool from 20,000 sheep amounts to about £3,000. It will be exactly that sum if each sheep give 6 lbs., which is a high but not an excessive average for unwashed wool. The expense of maintaining a run with 20,000 sheep, including the cost of the squatter's own home, may be put at £2,000 per annum, being £100 for every thousand sheep. It will at once be seen how rich the poor man may at once become by such a change in the circumstances of the wool trade. And it will be seen also how speculative and precarious such a business must be. The wool-grower of Australia watches the price-list for England with an intense and natural anxiety. He can do little or nothing to regulate the market. He cannot understand why it is that the fluctuations should be so great. But he obeys the market, too often with an implicit confidence which it does not deserve. When prices are high he increases his flocks, —and with his flocks he increases his debt also. He is almost negligent how much he may owe if wool be high. The temptation is so great that if his credit be good he will almost assuredly increase his flock to the bearing capability of his run. Three years of high prices will, perhaps, make him a rich man. But a fall again,—a speedy fall,—will bring

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him to the dust. It must be remembered that many of these men are dealing not with 20,000 sheep, but with more than five times that number; sometimes with more than ten times that number. When the large squatter really owns his flocks,—when he owes nothing to his merchant,—then even at the worst of times, with wool even at 8*d.*, he does well; and in that condition, when wool rises he becomes a millionaire. Things, as I write now, are all rose-coloured with the squatters;—but it may well be that before these words are published there shall come a change.

I went about two hundred miles north of Adelaide, so that I might get outside of Goyder's rain-line, and see something of the country in which rain is so scarce. I cannot say that the country is attractive to a visitor. There is very little to gratify the eye, and almost nothing to satisfy the taste. The South Australian free-selecter makes for himself a plentiful and I hope a happy home;—but he does not surround himself with prettiness or even with neatness. The greatest part of our journey, however, was beyond the free-selecter's limits, through a country that was brown, treeless, and absolutely uninteresting. I was frequently told that the run through which I was passing was excellently well adapted for sheep, and that the squatter who owned it was doing well. But I saw no grass and very few sheep. A stranger cannot but remark, throughout the pastoral districts of Australia, how seldom he sees sheep as he travels along. As in this country they do not carry above one sheep to ten acres, and as the animals would hardly be observed if each sheep maintained solitary possession of his own ten-acred domain, the result is not wonderful. But the traveller expects to see sheep and is disappointed. It may be that he will also expect emus and kangaroos, and he will generally be disappointed also in regard to them. Kangaroos I certainly have seen in great numbers, though by no means so often as I expected. An emu running wild I never did see. Tame emus round the houses in towns are very common, and of emus' eggs there is a plethora. On this journey I saw hardly any living animals. We went with four horses, at about six miles an hour, through a brown ugly district,

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which was bounded, nearly the whole way, by low hills, and on which there is no sign that timber has ever grown there. We put up for the night at the station of a non-resident squatter, in seeking which we lost our way in the dark. For an hour or so I felt uneasy, thinking that we should have to "camp out," without any preparation made for such a picnic;—but at last we were attracted by lights, and a party of us who had gone forth on foot reached the house. We met there a young man who was waiting for a companion, with whom he intended to make his way from the centre of Australia to the western coast. It seemed that his party would be lamentably deficient in means for such an expedition, and that he had hardly the energy for such an undertaking. In this work of Australian exploring men have to carry flour and tea with them, and to be satisfied to live upon flour and tea,—to protect themselves from the blacks,—to run the risk of failing water,—and to be constant, from month to month, without excitement to keep their courage warm. Our new acquaintance seemed to be going because he might as well go as let it alone;—but it may be that under that deportment were hidden all the energies of a Marco Polo, a Columbus, a Sturt, or a Livingstone. We fared sumptuously at the absent squatter's station, and went on our way the next morning.

I had not then seen a salt-bush country, though I subsequently passed through such a region in a part of New South Wales, of which I said a few words in speaking of that colony. Here, in the salt-bush of South Australia, there was not a blade of grass when I visited it. The salt-bush itself is an ugly grey shrub, about two feet high, which seems to possess the power of bringing forth its foliage without moisture. This foliage is impregnated with salt, and both sheep and cattle will feed upon it and thrive. It does not produce wool of the best class,—but it is regarded as being a very safe food for sheep, because it rarely fails. At the period of my visit the country was in want of rain; and I was assured that when the rain, then expected, should fall, the surface of the ground would be covered with grass. I can only say that I never saw a country more bare of

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grass. But for miles together,—over hundreds of square miles,—the salt-bush spreads itself; and as long as that lives the sheep will not be starved. Sometimes this shrub was diversified by a blue bush, a bush very much the same as the salt-bush in form, though of a dull slate-colour instead of grey. On this the sheep will not feed. There is also a poisonous shrub which the sheep will eat,—as to which there seemed to be an opinion that it was fatal only to travelling sheep, and not to those regularly pastured on the country.

The run which I visited bears about 120,000 sheep,—and they wander over about 1,200,000 acres. For all these sheep, and for all this extent of sheep-run, it is necessary to obtain water by means of wells, sunk to various depths from fifty to one hundred and twenty feet. The water can always be found,—not indeed always at the first attempt, but so surely that no land in that region need be deserted for want of it. The water when procured is invariably more or less brackish;—but the sheep thrive on it and like it. The wells are generally worked by men, sometimes by horses; but on large runs, where capital has been made available, the water is raised by windmills. Such was the case at the place I visited. The water is brought up into large tanks, holding from 30,000 to 60,000 gallons each, and from these tanks is distributed into troughs, made of stone and cement. These are carried out in different directions, perhaps two or three from each tank, and are so arranged that sheep can be watered from either side. If therefore there be three such troughs, the sheep in six different paddocks can be watered from one tank,—the well being so placed as to admit egress to it from various paddocks, all converging on the same centre. In this way 10,000 sheep will be watered at one well. As these paddocks contain perhaps 40 square miles each, or over 25,000 acres, the animals have some distance to travel before they can get a drink. In cold weather they do not require to drink above once in three days;—in moderate weather once in two days;—in very hot weather they will lie near to the troughs and not trouble themselves to go afield in search of food. On

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the run which I visited there were twenty of these wells, which, with their appurtenances of tanks, and troughs, and windmills, had cost about £500 each;—and there had been about as many failures in the search of water, wells which had been dug but at which no water was found;—and these had not been sunk without considerable expenditure. It may therefore be understood that a man requires some capital before he can set himself up as a grower of wool on a large scale in South Australia.

The state of the meat market in England is already affecting the South Australian squatter very materially,—as also the squatters in the other colonies. I left England in May, 1871, and at that time Australian meats had only begun to make their way in the London markets. In speaking of the Queensland meat-preserving companies as I found them in August and September, 1871, I spoke almost with doubt of the trade;—for there was doubt when I was in Queensland. But when I was in South Australia in April, 1872, the trade was established, and squatters were already calculating that the carcase should not in future be made to give way altogether to the wool. Meat, which is in round figures 10*d.* a pound in London, costs but 2*d.* a pound in South Australia. Then arises the question whether meat can be carried half-way round the globe in a good condition, or whether its nature makes it impossible that good mutton should be imported from Australia as well as good wool. That bad mutton may be imported,—that is, mutton which has been changed from good to bad by processes of cooking and packing previous to exportation,—we have known for some time. That any Australian meat has as yet reached the English market in a state that would enable it to compete with English meat, I do not believe. I feel sure that none has done so. But every mail during the latter months of my sojourn in Australia brought out tidings that the trade was on the increase,—so that when I left the colonies sheep were worth 3*s.* or 4*s.* a head more for butchers than they were twelve months earlier, when I arrived at Melbourne. Three shillings a head is certainly not much on a sheep in England,—where the animal at

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twelve months old may be worth from £3 10s. to £4. But in Australia, where 10s. a head is even now a good price, the difference is very large. When I reached Melbourne in July, 1871, I was told at a meat-preserving company that they could not afford to give more than 6s. a sheep. All that goes home to England is, after all, but a morsel to the markets of that little island; but to this wide continent the preparation of that morsel is most important.

In the district of which I am speaking the sheep are all "paddocked,"—that is to say, kept in by fences,—so that shepherding is unnecessary. I hope that I have already made clear to my reader the difference between shepherding sheep and paddocking sheep. I found that brush fences had been made at the rate of about £23 a mile. A brush fence, made of loose timber and wood, is not so neat as a wire fence, but it is equally serviceable for sheep;—and when fences have to be made by hundreds of miles, the difference in expenditure is considerable. A wire fence that will keep in sheep and lambs, can hardly be put up for less than £40 a mile. Five wires would suffice for sheep, but the lamb requires a lower wire to restrain his innocence. Nothing, I think, gives a surer proof of the wealth of the Australian colonies generally, than the immense amount of fencing that has been put up within the last ten years. A run of twenty miles square, or containing 400 square miles, equal to 256,000 acres, is by no means excessive in size, though it is about as big as a small English county. The squatter who intends to paddock his sheep instead of hiring shepherds to go about with them, has to divide his area into perhaps twenty different paddocks. Should he do this, with the smallest possible amount of distance of partitions, he would have to make 240 miles of fencing. At the station which I visited we had come again upon timber, though the country was by no means thickly wooded. But when there is no timber near, the cost of fencing is more than doubled.

It is of course understood that the normal squatter is a tenant of the Crown. In Victoria the great wool-growers

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now own for the most part their own lands;—and the purchase of pasture lands has become general elsewhere under the pressure of the free-selecter. But the genuine squatter is he who sits upon government land for which he pays a rent to the colony; and in South Australia such is still the condition of the larger wool-growers. Outside of Goyder's range,—which is the South Australian squatter's proper region, the rental varies according to the value of the land and the nature of the pasture. A computation is made of the number of sheep the land should carry, and the squatter is charged 6*d.* a sheep on the best land, 4*d.* on the second best, and 2*d.* a sheep on the poorest. If he should keep more sheep than the number computed, he pays at the same rate for the excess. But for the number computed he must pay, even though he should not keep so many. I found that this arrangement gave satisfaction even to the squatters,—a result which has certainly not been common in the Australian colonies generally. On runs within the line of rainfall, this rule as to the rate at which sheep are pastured does not prevail; but such runs have generally been purchased, and are the freehold property of the wool-growers, or are occupied as commonage by the owners of neighbouring freeholds.

I feel it to be impossible to describe with accuracy the effect upon pastoral speculators of a rise in the price of wool amounting to 80 per cent., the whole difference going to profit. My readers may perhaps be able to imagine the present condition of the squatter's mind. "Non secus in bonis Ab insolenti temperatam Lætitia," are words which not unfrequently rise to the minds of the observer. It is, however, very much to the advantage of the colony at large that this prosperity should be continued. When wool is low every interest in Australia is depressed. Even mining shares do not go off so readily under the verandahs when the pockets of the squatters are not full of money.

I also visited a large cattle-station in the south of the colony, on the eastern side of the lakes. It belongs to a rich Scotch absentee landowner who sits in our parliament, and I will only say of it that I think I ate the best beef

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there that ever fell in my way. Like other things beef must have a best and a worst, and I think that the Portalloch beef was the best. I heard that there was beef as good,—perhaps even better,—up at a large cattle station far north; but the information reached me from the owner of the northern station who was with us at Portalloch. As I found his information on all other subjects to be reliable, I am bound to believe him in this. If it be so, he must be the very prince of beef-growers. On the road from Adelaide to the lakes,—on the lake side of the Mount Lofty hills,—we stayed a night at the little town of Strathalbyn. Afterwards, on my route back to Victoria, which I made by steamer from Port Adelaide to Macdonnel Bay, and thence overland across the border, I stayed also at the little town of Gambier-Town, under Mount Gambier. I mention these places because they were the cleanest, prettiest, pleasantest little towns that I saw during my Australian travels. I would say that they were like well-built thriving English villages of the best class, were it not that they both contained certain appliances and an architectural pretension which hardly belong to villages. When the place in question is dirty, unfinished, and forlorn,—when the attempt at doing something considerable in the way of founding a town seems to have been a failure,—the appearance of this pretension is very disagreeable. But at Strathalbyn and Gambier-Town there had been success, and they had that look about them which makes a stranger sometimes fancy in a new place that it might be well for him to come and abide there to the end. They are both in South Australia. Perhaps I was specially moved to admiration because the inns were good.

The country around Mount Gambier is very pretty, and un-Australian. There are various lakes,—evidently the craters of old volcanoes,—lying high up among hills. And among them and about them the grass is green, and the ferns grow wild,—much to the disgust of the owners of the land, upon whom they have lately come as a new infliction. And the trees stand about in a park-like fashion. The country here was some time since given up to agriculture,

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and the Gambier-Town people were proud of their wheat. But the grass grows again now,—artificial grass, and a large herd of Lincoln sheep is in fashion,—partly from the increased price of mutton, but chiefly because at this moment the long coarse staple of the Lincoln wool is high priced. The weight of wool given by these sheep is very much greater than that of the Merino. Squatters say just at present that the Lincoln sheep pay better than the Merino, where the land will carry the former. I doubt, however, whether this state of things will last.

I was told, when in the neighbourhood, that the farmers from Gambier-Town had gone across the border into Victoria, tempted by the terms on which free-selecters there were allowed to buy land. Many no doubt had done so, settling themselves in the western district of that colony. But when I was again in Victoria, I was told that there was another exodus of farmers commencing, and that men were going back to South Australia under other temptations offered by the South Australian laws. Considering the condition of the population and its sparseness, considering also the great blessing of settled prospects, I could not but feel daily how great was the pity that there should be six different sets of Australian laws for the people of the six colonies. There are in all about 1,700,000 of them, and they agree to be united on no subject.

I will venture here to allude to a matter very far removed indeed from the general scope of this book. Before leaving England a friend of mine had put into my hand a volume of ballads, which had been sent home to him from Australia, called "Bush Ballads, or Galloping Rhymes." He told me that the author had been a young Scotch gentleman who had gone out young, but had not done well. He had taken to a sporting life, and had then fallen into a sad melancholy, and had—died. I read the ballads, and was greatly struck by their energy. It was evident that the writer of them had lived out of the literary world, and that he had lacked that care and spared himself that labour which criticism and study will produce, and which are necessary to finish work;—but of the man's genius there

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could be no doubt. There was one called "Britomarte," which alone entitled him to be called a poet. I found that he had lived in this neighbourhood, near to Mount Gambier, and that he had been well loved by many friends. For a while he was in the South Australian parliament, but parliamentary work had not suited him. He was given to the riding of racers,—and was prone to write about horses and the race-course. In the literary traces which I found of him in the neighbourhood, there was but scanty allusion to other matters, except to racing, and to the melancholy, thoughtful, solitary, heart-eating life which a bushman lives. His horse had been his companion when he was alone,—and when he got back to the world horses were his delight. They are seldom safe companions for a man prone to excitement. I heard wondrous tales of the courage of his riding. As a steeple-chase rider he was well known in Melbourne; but few seemed to have heard of him as a poet. It is as a poet that I speak of him now. His name was **A. L. Gordon.**

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CHAPTER V.

MINERALS.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA is a copper colony. Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland are pre-eminently golden. Tasmania is doing a little business in gold, but by no means enough to give her importance. Western Australia has lead-mines, though as yet she has derived but little wealth from them; she also is waiting for gold, hoping that it may yet turn up. South Australia is undoubtedly auriferous. Not only have specks of gold been found as in Western Australia, but diggers have worked at the trade, and have lived upon it, and the industry is still continued. At a publican's house I saw bottles of gold, which he made it a part of his trade to buy from diggers. At a certain bank in Adelaide I saw a cabinet with drawers half full of gold, which it was a part of the business of the bankers to buy from publicans or other intermediate agents. But this was all digger's gold, not miner's gold,—gold got by little men in little quantities from surface-washing. Of gold mines proper there are none as yet in the colony. That there will be such found and worked up in the northern territory, within the tropics, is now an opinion prevalent in Adelaide. Whether there be ground for such hope I have no evidence on which to form an opinion; but should this be the case, the northern territory will probably become a separate colony. Of this, however, I shall have to speak again in another chapter. Up to the time of my visit to Adelaide gold to the value of three-quarters of a million sterling had as yet been found in South Australia. This, of course, is as

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nothing to the produce of the three eastern colonies, and therefore South Australia is not hitherto entitled to consider herself as a golden land.

But what she has wanted in gold she has made up in copper. And in some respects the copper has, I think, been better than gold, as affording a more wholesome class of labour. There is less of gambling in the business,—less of gambling even among the shareholders and managing people, and infinitely less temptation to gamble among the workmen. The fact that the metal must be dealt with in large quantities, that vast weights must be moved, and that heavy machinery must be employed, that no man can find enough to support himself for six months by a stroke of luck and carry it away in his waistcoat pocket, gives a sobriety to the employment which the search after gold often lacks. It is quite true that latterly the great discoveries of Australia have needed works as ponderous, shafts as deep, and machinery as costly, as any other description of mining enterprise; but, nevertheless, the enormous wealth which may be represented by a small quantity has a direct tendency to create a speculative spirit in the minds of all employed. The miner who earns his £2 10*s.* a week by blasting a quartz reef may work as steadily, and certainly does work as hard, as he who is picking up coal or copper-bearing dirt, but he is conscious all through that it is gold upon which he is working, and his imagination, aroused by the richness of the metal he is seeking, is ever pushing him on to personal speculation;—till the goal before his eyes is not the few hundred pounds which he certainly could save by industry as a miner, but the fortune which he might possibly make by some happy circumstance in his favour as a speculator. The circumstance now and again does occur; but the result is not always happy. There is much less of such incentive to gambling among copper mines;—though it is not altogether absent, for copper mines are also worked upon tribute.

The Kapunda copper-mine is the oldest in the colony, having been discovered in 1843, by two gentlemen engaged in squatting operations. It was considered to be a great

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day in the colony when the first ore was raised from this mine on January 8, 1844. The Kapunda mines are still worked; but their celebrity was soon eclipsed by the famous Burra Burra mine, and has now been altogether cast into the shade by the mines at Wallaroo and Moonta. I did not visit Kapunda, but I was told that the town itself is prosperous and well ordered.

The Burra Burra copper-mines, if not the next discovered in South Australia, were the next of any magnitude, and were for some years the great source of South Australian mining wealth. They have had a much wider fame than those of Kapunda. They are about ninety miles nearly due north from Adelaide, and they have the advantage of a railway for the whole distance. The one great railway of the colony runs from Adelaide to Kooringa, the name of the town close to which the Burra Burra mines are situated, with a branch to Kapunda, of which place I have already spoken. Copper therefore may be said to have made the existing railways of the colony. The copper at Burra Burra was first found by a shepherd, named Pickitt, in 1845. What became of Pickitt I never heard; but two companies were at once formed for the purchase from the government of 20,000 acres under special survey. This was the land in which the copper was known to lie, but its exact whereabouts was still a mining mystery. Of these two companies one was called the Nobs, as being specially aristocratic; the other, which which was plebeian, were the Snobs. They combined, as neither could raise sufficient money alone, and the government could not or would not grant a special survey under a fixed amount which either separately was unable to pay. The land was then divided, and the two companies drew lots. The Snobs got the northern portion and all the copper, and the Nobs were driven to resell their moiety for pastoral purposes. Where the copper did lie, it lay absolutely on the surface. There was as it were a rock of copper, so that deep sinking was not necessary. During the first six years of the mine's history 80,000 tons of ore were shipped to England, giving a profit of nearly half a million sterling. The company had begun with a

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capital of only £1,500 over and above the sum expended on the purchase of the land. Those were the palmy days of the Burra Burra mines, of which we used to hear much in England.

In 1851 the miners, attracted by the new gold of the next colony, rushed away to the Victorian gold-diggings, and the Burra Burra were almost deserted. But after a time the men returned, and English miners were got over from Cornwall, and the success was continued. In 1859, 1,170 persons were employed there. But gradually the surface copper was worked out, and the great attraction of other and still richer mines at Wallaroo and Moonta paled the ineffectual fire of Burra Burra. For a time the works were almost ceased. When I visited the place in 1872 new operations under a new management had commenced, and many in the colony believed that a complete resuscitation would take place. There were, however, not a great number of hands employed, and the works going on,—which were on a large scale,—seemed to be preparatory to copper production rather than themselves productive. There are three towns adjacent to these mines, Kooringa, which I have already named, Redruth, and Aberdeen. Thrown together they make one broken, meandering, unfinished street, which is by no means tempting to the ordinary traveller. It is hard to say how these things arrange themselves; but the wealth of the great Burra Burra mine certainly has not succeeded in making a great Burra Burra city.

But Wallaroo is now the greatest name in South Australian copper-mines, and Moonta is second to it. Between Gulf St. Vincent and Spencer's Gulf there lies a large outstretching territory, bearing nearly as close a semblance to a man's leg as does Italy, called Yorke's Peninsula. At the top of this, at the part of the leg farthest from the foot, close on the shore of Spencer's Gulf, and therefore on the outside of the leg, is Wallaroo. Here, previous to 1860, a squatter held a station for sheep, which even for that purpose was by no means encouraging. As a spot to be inhabited by men and women nothing could be more dreary or unfortunate. There was no water, and even the wells when dug gave

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forth water so brackish that it could not be used. The vegetation was stunted and miserable. The ground was sandy and barren. Here, on 17th December, 1859, a shepherd, named Boor, found a piece of copper, and brought the tidings to his master. Within a few months £80,000 had been advanced for working copper-mines by a mercantile firm in Adelaide. The squatter was in the way to become a very rich man, and the shepherd had become a mining hero. In the very next year another shepherd, named Ryan, found another piece of copper at a place called Moonta, about ten miles from Wallaroo, on the same sheep station,—and this was at once worked by the same persons. This other shepherd was also enriched, and the squatter became a millionaire. Perhaps few mines were ever opened in which there has been a quicker, and at the same time a steadier, mercantile progress than in those of Wallaroo and Moonta.

There are five distinct towns, all created by these mines, standing witin ten miles of each other, containing together about 17,000 inhabitants; and previous to 1860 there was no house in the district but a wretched cottage, hardly better than a hut. The two townships laid out by government are Kadina, near to the Wallaroo mines, and Moonta, close to those bearing that name. But these mines had the inestimable benefit of being near the sea;—and now there is a third town, called Port Wallaroo, from which the copper is shipped, joined both to Kadina and to Moonta by railway. Port Wallaroo is a thriving harbour, and is perhaps the largest of the five, as here are built the smelting works at which the ore is turned into copper. For a time the ore was sent over to Swansea and was smelted there,—but as the two companies became rich and powerful, smelting works were opened, and the copper is now sent to England in bars. But the miners do not live either at Kadina, at Moonta Town, or at Port Wallaroo. They have built habitations for themselves round the very mouths of the shafts, and in this way two other vast villages have sprung up, called Wallaroo Mines and Moonta Mines. Very singular places they are,—consisting of groups of low cottages,

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clustering together in streets, one street being added on to another as the need for them arises, not built with any design such as is usual in the towns of new countries, but created by the private enterprise of the inhabitants,—and in fact put up in opposition to the law. The surface is government land leased out specially for mining purposes, and not for building purposes. No one is entitled to build on it. There are the townships, duly laid out in accordance with the law, close by, on which any one may build who desires to live there, purchasing his lot for the purpose in the proper way. But the workman's need to be near his work has been too strong for the law, and these towns, much bigger than the towns of the townships proper, have established themselves.

In no instance is the centralizing tendency of the government in young countries and amidst scanty populations more visible than in their management of new towns; and it never struck me more forcibly than at Wallaroo and Moonta. It is either necessary, or the government thinks that it is necessary, that everything should be arranged for the new-coming inhabitants, and that they should be called upon to manage nothing for themselves. Roads and bridges are made from the taxes. The land is divided out into its sections by the government. Any comer may buy his section at a certain price, and may build his house,—but he must deal with the government officers, and must build his house according to specification. The idea, no doubt, is not only compatible with freedom of action, but is intended to encourage it, and springs from a theory of democratic equality. It is the duty of the government to see that one man does not ride over another, that the smallest and the poorest may have their share of the public wealth of the community,—that as far as possible there shall be no very small men and no very big men. The Utopian politician travels as far as he can away from the despotism of patriarchal rule, but he travels in a circle and comes back to it. The minister, though he be chosen by the people, becomes a despot; and, like other despots, he is forced to rule so that he may please his favourites. The favourites of the minister in a democratic community are they who can sup-

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port him in parliament; and on their behalf he finds himself too often forced to read the law either this way or that. In these mining townships the land sold for building had been sold with certain protective privileges. They who bought were not only entitled to keep shops, but were encouraged to buy land by the assurance that no shops should be kept by others within a certain distance outside the township. Consequently no miner's wife can buy an ounce of tea, or a yard of ribbon, or a delf cup, without going out of the bigger concourse of people to the lesser to make her purchase; nor can the miner, if he fancies that the prices at Kadina or at Moonta are too high for him, try the question by opening a rival shop for himself in his own immediate locality. In these large mining villages nothing can be bought and nothing sold. In reality the man when he has constructed a house has not even a house to sell. He should have built it in the official town if he desired to avail himself of his property.

The matter is mentioned here chiefly because I thus get an opportunity of alluding to general interference of government in matters which with us are altogether beyond its scope. No doubt such interference is necessary in new communities. Government must do more when nothing has already been done, than it can do with an old-established nation. It must make roads. It must apportion the land. It must take upon its shoulders for a while the duties which fall afterwards upon local officers. But the tendency is to centralize power, and to put a privilege of interfering into the hands of individuals, which privilege can be and is improperly used for political purposes, and which to an observer from an old country seems to be antagonistic to liberty. I do not know that the miners at Wallaroo and Moonta suffer very much from their restricted rights. I do not think that they know that they suffer at all. But I groaned for them in spirit when I found that not one among them could put up a penn'orth of barley-sugar for sale in his own cottage windows. Such restriction would very quickly create a rebellion in England.

I went down a mine at Wallaroo, finding it always to be

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a duty to go down a shaft on visiting any mining locality,—and I came up again. But I cannot say that I saw anything when I was down there. The descent was 450 feet, and I felt relieved when I was once more on the surface. I walked below among various levels, and had the whole thing explained to me;—but for no useful purpose whatever. It was very hard work, and I think I should have begged for mercy had any additional level been proposed to me; as it was, I went through it like a man, without complaint,—and was simply very much fatigued. As I rose to the air I swore I would never go down another mine, and hitherto I have kept my vow. I found that miners working for simple wages could earn about £1 18*s.* a week, and that men on tribute would realise something more,—perhaps about £2 5*s.* The "tribute" men undoubtedly worked harder, as they were toiling on their own behalf, reaping the advantage of their increased labour. In speaking of the Victorian gold mines, I have endeavoured to explain the system of tribute,—by which the miner is enabled to share both in the profit and in the risk of the speculation. No doubt the result in the raising of copper is the same as in the finding of gold; but the transaction is by no means equally speculative. The man who works for gold on tribute may find none, and be called upon not only to work on, but also to defray expenses. Whereas the miner on tribute in a copper mine does not go into the affair till it is known that the copper is there. According to the percentage of ore which is extracted, his earnings will be higher or lower;—but his earnings are assured, and, as the result of the arrangement, by working harder than he would otherwise work he simply earns more than he would otherwise earn.

At the Wallaroo mines I found a set of black natives employed on the surface work, at regular wages of 4*s.* 4*d.* a day, or 26*s.* a week. There were about ten of them, and I was told that they had been there for three months, and had been as regular in their attendance as white men. This was the only instance I found in Australia in which I myself came upon any number of these aborigines in regular and voluntary employment. I have seen a man at one station

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and a woman at another as to whom I have been told that they were regarded as part of the regular establishment,—but it always seemed that their work was of a fitful kind. I learned also that in one or two of the colonies, in Western Australia and in Queensland, they are drilled and used as policemen for the control of their own countrymen;—but such service as this I can hardly regard as steady, regular work. Here the experiment was said to have answered for the period that I have named. I came across one of these men, who was supposed to be a little ill, and therefore not on duty at the moment. He was dressed in a very genteel manner,—with clothes softer and finer than a white miner would wear even when on a holiday. He was very gentle and civil, but not very communicative. He bought clothes with his money, be said, and food,—and the rest he put away. He did not resent the impertinence of my inquiries, but was not quite willing to gratify my curiosity. My desire was to learn whether he had realised the advantage of laying up and permanently possessing property. I doubt whether he had, although he did mutter something as to putting away his wages. He seemed much more willing to talk about the cold in the head under which he had been suffering than of his general condition in life.

At the smelting works of Wallaroo men were earning higher wages than in the mines;—something like an average of £2 10*s.* a week;—but their hours of labour were longer. The miners work day and night, by shifts of eight hours each. The smelters work also throughout the twenty-four hours,—but they work only in two sets. I should think that twelve hours by a furnace must be worse than eight below ground. The smelters, however, probably do not keep at it during the whole time. The smelters I found had, almost to a man, come from Wales, whereas so many of the miners were Cornish men as to give to Moonta and Wallaroo the air of Cornish towns.

Coal for the smelting is brought from Newcastle, in New South Wales; but the inferior ore is sent to other smelting works at Newcastle,—so that the ships which bring the coal may go back with freights. The copper therefore is sent to

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the European markets, not only from Port Wallaroo, but also from Newcastle.

When I was in the colony in April, 1872, copper, which in April, 1871, had been worth only £74 per ton, rose to £105,—so that the happy owners of mines in a working condition were revelling in a success not inferior to that of the squatters. Copper and wool were both so high that the fortune of the colony was supposed to be made. I found that there were no less than 70 "reputed" mines in the colony at the close of the year 1870, of which 38 were reported to have been then at work. But sundry even of these 38 were not supposed to be remunerative. Many of the 70 so-called "reputed" mines are mere mining claims, which are held under government as possible future speculations. Those which are distant from the sea and distant also from railways cannot be worked with a profit, let the ore be ever so rich. The cost of the carriage destroys the wealth of the copper. At present when men talk of the mining wealth of South Australia they allude to Wallaroo and Moonta.

I have said that these places are joined together by a railway,—but they are not joined to any other place by rail. The traveller to Wallaroo is forced to go from Adelaide either by coach or by steamer round the Gulfs. I was taken there by one of the great copper-mining authorities of the colony, and we elected to go by coach, in order that I might see something of the country. The coach was a mail-coach, with four horses, running regularly on the road every day;—but on our return journey we were absolutely lost in the bush,—coach, coachman, horses, mails, passengers, and all. The man was trying a new track, and took us so far away from the old track that no one knew where we were. At last we found ourselves on the seashore. Of course it will be understood that there was no vestige of a road or pathway. Travellers are often "bushed" in Australia. They wander off their paths and are lost amidst the forests. In this instance the whole mail-coach was "bushed." When we came upon the sea, and no one could say what sea it was, I felt that the adventure was almost more than interesting.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.—TELEGRAPH AND RAILWAY.

THERE are not a few in the colonies who declare that South Australia, as a name for the colony which uses it, is a misnomer. Nearly the whole of Victoria is south of nearly the whole of South Australia. Adelaide is considerably to the north of Melbourne, and but very little to the south of Sydney. Consequently those foolish English people at home are actually making the stupidest mistakes! Letters have been addressed to Melbourne, New South Wales, South Australia. The story is very current, and is often told to show the want of geographical education under which the old country suffers. I have not, however, been able to trace the address to later years, and at any time between 1837 and 1851 the details as given by the letter-writer were only too correct. Melbourne did belong to New South Wales, and certainly was in the most southern district of Australia. But if the name South Australia was bad, or falsely describing the colony, when first given, it is infinitely worse now. Then the proposed confines of the young settlement lay around Spencer Gulf, and Gulf St. Vincent, and Encounter Bay, which armlets of the sea break up into the land from the eastern extremity of the Great Australian Bight,—as the curve in the sea line of the southern coast of the continent is called. The new colonists had settled themselves, or, when the name was chosen, were proposing to settle themselves, at the centre of the south coast, and the name was fair enough. But since those days South Australia has extended herself northwards till she has made good her

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claim up to a line far north of that which divides Queensland from New South Wales, and now she is supposed to run right through the continent up to the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Indian Ocean, so that she thoroughly divides the vast desert tracts of Western Australia from the three eastern colonies, Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. As far as area is concerned, she is at present as much northern as southern. In some of our maps the northern half of these territories is separated by a line from the southern, as though it were a separate colony;—but it has had no name of its own yet given to it; its lands are at the disposition of the government of South Australia; its very few inhabitants are subject to South Australian laws; and it is in fact a part of South Australia. It contains over 500,000 square miles; but, with the exception of one or two very small settlements on the coast, it has no white population. The aborigines who wander through it have been little disturbed, and nothing was known of it till the great enterprise of running a telegraph wire through it from south to north had been conceived and commenced. Now the northern territory has come into fashion, men talk about it in the colonies, and it is becoming necessary that even here in England the fact should be recognised that there is such a land, which will probably before long demand to be instituted as a separate colony.

The telegraph posts and wires by which the Australian colonies are now connected with Great Britain are already an established fact. This line enters the Australian continent from Java, at a point on the northern coast called Port Darwin. At Port Darwin there is a small settlement called Palmerston, around which land had been sold to the extent of 500,000 acres when I was in the colony, and this has been selected as the landing-place of European news. The colonisation of the northern territory is thus begun,—and there can be little doubt but that a town, and then a settlement, and then a colony, will form themselves.

When the scheme of the telegraph was first put on foot the colony of South Australia undertook to make the entire line across the continent,—the submarine line to Java and

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the line thence on to Singapore and home to Europe being in other hands. It was an immense undertaking for a community so small in number, and one as to which many doubted the power of the colony to complete it. But it has been completed. I had heard, before I left England in 1871, that an undertaking had been given by the government of South Australia to finish the work by January 1, 1872. This certainly was not done, but very great efforts were made to accomplish it, and the failure was caused by the violence of nature rather than by any want of energy. Unexpected and prolonged rains interfered with the operations and greatly retarded them. The world is used to the breaking of such promises in regard to time, and hardly ever expects that a contractor for a large work shall be punctual within a month or two. The world may well excuse this breach of contract, for surely no contractor ever had a harder job of work on hand. The delay would not be worth mention here, were it not that the leading South Australians of the day, headed by the governor, had been so anxious to show that they could really do all that they had undertaken to perform, and were equally disappointed at their own partial failure.

The distance of the line to be made was about 1,800 miles, and the work had to be done through a country unknown, without water, into which every article needed by the men had to be carried over deserts, across unbridged rivers, through unexplored forests, amidst hostile tribes of savages,—in one of the hottest regions of the world. I speak here of the lack of water, and I have said above that the works were hindered by rain. I hope my gentle readers will not think that I am piling up excuses which obliterate each other. There is room for deviation of temperature in a distance of 1,800 miles,—and Australia generally, though subject specially to drought, is subject to floods also. And the same gentle readers should remember,—when they bethink themselves how easy it is to stick up a few poles in this or another thickly inhabited country, and how small is the operation of erecting a line of telegraph wires as compared with that of constructing a rail-

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way or even a road,—how great had hitherto been the difficulty experienced by explorers in simply making their way across the continent, and in carrying provisions for themselves as they journeyed. Burke and Wills perished in the attempt, and the line to be taken was through the very country in which Burke and Wills had been lost. The dangers would of course not be similar. The army of workmen sent to put up the posts and to stretch the wires was accompanied by an army of purveyors. Men could never be without food or without water. But it was necessary that everything should be carried. For the northern portion of the work it was necessary that all stores should be sent round by ships, and then taken up rivers which had not hitherto been surveyed. If the gentle reader will think only of the amount of wire required for 1,800 miles of telegraph communication, and of the circumstances of its carriage, he will, I think, recognise the magnitude of the enterprise.

The colony divided the work, the government undertaking about 800 miles in the centre, which portion of the ground was considered to be most difficult to reach. The remaining distances, consisting of 500 miles in the south and 500 miles in the north, were let out to contractors. The southern part, which was comparatively easy as being accessible from Adelaide, was finished in time, as was also the middle distance which the government had kept in its own hands. But the difficulties at the northern end were so great that they who had undertaken the work failed to accomplish it, and it was at last completed by government, —if I remember rightly, somewhat more than six months after the date fixed. The line did not come into immediate working order, owing to some temporary fault beyond the Australian borders.

The importance of the telegraph to the colonies cannot be overrated, and the anxiety it created can only be understood by those who have watched the avidity with which news from England is received in all her dependencies. Australia had hitherto been dependent on one arrival monthly from England,—and on a very little credited monthly dispatch reaching her shores viâ New York, San Francisco,

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and New Zealand. The English monthly mail touches first at King George's Sound, in Western Australia, but thence there are no wires into the other colonies. The mail steamer then passes on to Melbourne, while a branch boat takes the mails to Adelaide. As the distance to Adelaide is considerably shorter than to Melbourne, the English news generally reaches that port first, and is thence disseminated to the other colonies. That happens once a month. Then comes, also once a month, the so-called Californian telegrams, not unfrequently giving a somewhat distorted view of English affairs. This is now changed for daily news. We who have daily news,—as do all of us in England every morning at our breakfast-table,—are sometimes apt to regard it as a bore, and tell ourselves that it would be delightful to have a real budget on an occasion after a month of silence. The only way to learn the value of the thing, is to be without it for a time. In the single item of the price of wool in the London market, the Australian telegraph will be of inestimable value to the colonies. When the scheme was first brought forward there was a question whether the line through the Australian continent should be made by the joint efforts of the colonies or by the energy of one. South Australia is justly proud of herself, in that she undertook the work, and has accomplished it.

The telegraph line has certainly been the means of introducing the northern territory into general notice; and now a much larger project has been formed,—which, if it be carried out, will certainly create a new colony on the northern coast. The proposition is to make a railway along the telegraph line, a railway from Adelaide right across Australia, over the huge desert of the continent, to Port Darwin! Who will travel by it? What will it carry? Whence will the money come? How will it be made to pay? And as it cannot possibly be made to pay,—as far as human sight can see,—what insane philanthropists or speculators will be found able to subscribe the enormous sum of money necessary for such a purpose? These are of course the questions that are asked. The distance to be covered by the new line is very nearly 1,800 miles, and the

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money said to be necessary for it is £10,000,000! There are no inhabitants in the country,—at any rate none who would use a railway, and at the distant terminus there is no town,—not as yet a community of 200 white inhabitants.

I soon found that the railway was but a portion of the plan,—and indeed the smaller portion of it. The scheme is as follows:—The parliament of South Australia is to pass a bill authorising the formation of a small preliminary company, which company shall be empowered by the colonial legislature to make over no less than two hundred millions of acres in freehold to the shareholders of the proposed railway company. The small company is to give birth to a large company, the residence of which is to be in London, and this large company is to consist of shareholders who will subscribe the money needed for the railway, and take the land as bought by their money. The great object of the promoters, who, when I was in Adelaide, were chiefly gentlemen having seats in the parliament of the colony, was to open up to human uses an immense track of country which is at present useless, and in this way to spread the reputation and increase the prosperity of the colony at large. There can be no doubt that population would follow the railway, as it has always followed railways in the United States. The pastures would be opened to sheep; and contingent advantages are of course anticipated,—such as mineral fields of various kinds. Within 250 miles of the southern end copper exists in large quantities, and the expense of carriage alone suspends its extraction. At the Port Darwin end, on the northern coast, gold has been found, and they who are hopeful declare that a few years will see the richest gold-fields of Australia near the banks of the Victoria and the Roper Rivers. A world of hopes rises to the mind of the sanguine proprietor as the largeness of his scheme endears it more and more to his heart, till he sees the happiness of thousands and the magnificence of himself in the realisation of his project.

That such a railway should be made on the speculation of trade returns is impossible; but if the South Australian parliament be in earnest, and if the colony will give her land,

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—land which she at present has in such abundance that she cannot use it,—it may be that funds sufficient for commencing the railway will be produced. It is proposed that the land shall be given as the line is made,—so many acres for every mile of railway. The entire territory contiguous to the line is not to be given. The land is to be divided into blocks, of which alternate blocks are to be surrendered, and alternate blocks retained, by the government, so that the new owners of the territory may be constrained as to price and other terms of sale. Of course the company would fail in selling if it charged more than the government, or proposed terms less advantageous than those offered by the government. But there seem to lack two ingredients for the thorough success of such a scheme,—a town at the end, such as was San Francisco when the railway was proposed across the Rocky Mountains from Chicago to that city, and a wheat-growing country for its support, such as California, —and such as Oregon is, and the Utah territory.

I do not believe that I shall live to see a railway made from Adelaide to Port Darwin, or even that younger men than I will do so. The greatness of many accomplished enterprises is now teaching men to believe that everything is possible; and they who are sanguine are falling into the error,—directly opposite to that of our grandfathers,—of thinking that nothing is too hard to be accomplished. I cannot believe in the expenditure of £10,000,000 on the construction of a railway which is to run through a desert to nowhere. But I do believe in the gold-fields and pastures of Port Darwin, and in the beauties of the Roper and Victoria Rivers; and, hot though the country be, I think that another young colony will found itself on the western shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

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CHAPTER VII.

LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNMENT.

With some small variations the scheme as to parliament and executive government is the same in South Australia as in the other colonies. There are king, lords, and commons,—or in other language, Governor, Legislative Council, and House of Assembly. The most remarkable variation is to be found in the mode adopted for getting together the Legislative Council or House of Colonial Lords,—which mode I regard as the worst ever yet invented for summoning a chamber of senators. In England our House of Peers is hereditary, the Crown having the power to add to its number as it pleases,—and thus, at any rate, the country does acquire the services of a body of legislative magnates without any trouble to itself. It is a great thing to be a peer, and the peers as a rule live up to the position which the country assigns them. In the United States the senators of the National Congress are elected from their different States by a complicated machinery which certainly effects its object, by bringing the leading politicians of the day into the Upper House, and by conferring on that House dignity and reputation. In some of our colonies, in New South Wales for instance, and in Queensland, the members of the Upper House are nominated by the Crown,—or rather, in fact, by the responsible ministers of the day, who are accountable for the selections which they make, and who confer the honour on men anxious and for the most part able to take a part in public affairs. As one party becomes stronger than another in the colony, so does the minister of one

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party have more frequent opportunities of introducing his friends into the Legislative Council than the ministers of the other party,—and the preponderance of public opinion is represented by the Upper as well as the Lower Chamber. In other colonies, as in Victoria and South Australia, the members of the Legislative Council are elected by the people,—but the manner of doing so is different. In Victoria the whole colony is divided into provinces, and each province periodically elects its members. Even then the interest felt is not very great, as I endeavoured to explain, when speaking of the Victorian legislature,—but the provinces do in some sort identify themselves with their own members; and, though the political feeling in the matter is mild, it exists and has its influence. In South Australia the members of the Upper Chamber are elected by the colony at large, and therefore when elections come round, no political feeling is excited.

This Upper House consists of eighteen members. Every fourth year six members retire, in February, and the votes of the entire colony are taken as to the election of their successors,—so that the members are elected for twelve years. There is a property qualification for voting,—£20 leasehold, £25 household, or £50 freehold. Very slight interest is taken in the elections,—as might be expected from such a scheme. The distances in the colony are enormous, and each district feels that as the election is to be made by the colony at large, its own effect must be very small. When the result of a national election is of extreme importance to parties,—as is the case with the election of a President in the United States,—the country can be awakened to the work; but no political animation can be aroused by the national importance of sending six members to the Upper House. As a consequence men do not vote except in the towns, and do not vote there with any regularity. At the election of 1869, 4,468 votes only were cast, by a body of 15,773 electors. Certain members who have long been in the House keep their seats when the day for their re-election comes round, because no one cares to disturb them; but every now and then some obscure but ambitious and pro-

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bably absolutely unfit individual puts himself forward, and is elected, to the scandal of the House,—because there has been no interest felt in the matter. The expenditure of a few hundred pounds would almost certainly carry an election, —not because a few hundred pounds have much force in the colony, but because the amount of antagonistic force used is very small. I look upon this as the very worst plan yet adopted for maintaining the existence of a legislative chamber.

The Lower House consists of seventy-two members, who are elected by thirty-six districts,—two members for each district. They sit for three years,—or would do but for dissolutions. Manhood suffrage, with vote by ballot as a matter of course, prevails; but residence for six months is required for an elector,—so that the nomad tribe of wandering vagrants who call themselves workmen, but are in truth beggars, is excluded. The competition for seats in the House of Assembly is sufficiently lively to show that a seat is desired, but it is not very keen. At the time of the election for the House of Assembly in 1870, there were 39,647 men in the colony entitled to be electors, but only 17,233 voted.

I found the ballot to be generally popular,—because it tended to make things quiet at elections. Sir James Fergusson, the governor of the colony,—who as a Conservative member for a Scotch county, and as one of the Conservative government at home, cannot have loved the ballot here, in England,—thus expresses his opinion on the subject to the Secretary of State:—"I am bound to state that the ballot is generally and remarkably popular in the colony. To the people of the colony it appears to give entire satisfaction." I am bound to report this as the opinion which I found to prevail among almost all classes as to the use of the ballot in Australia. I give my evidence unwillingly, because I myself very much dislike the ballot for English use, and believe that a mistake is made by those who argue that because it suits the colonies, therefore it will suit ourselves. With us the object is secrecy, which I think should not be an object, and which I think also will not be obtained. In

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the colonies secrecy is not desired, but tranquillity is felt to be a blessing. It is clear that the ballot does assist in producing tranquillity.

But it may be questioned whether even tranquillity at elections is to be regarded as an unmixed blessing. Apathy is certainly not desirable, and it may be that tranquillity will show itself to be akin to apathy. Men are always eager as to that in which they are truly interested, and real human eagerness will produce excitement and noise. Broken heads are bad things, but even broken heads are better than political indifference. They who have framed the Australian constitutions and have selected the modes of election for the legislative chambers of the colonies, have had before their eyes an idea of human political excellence which has never hitherto prevailed, and never will prevail till that good time comes which we call the millennium. They have desired to produce great vitality in the electors without any excitement at the elections. Men are not to rush to the polls,—certainly not to go thither under stress of fear, or bribery, or drink; but all men are to walk there in orderly strings, under the pressure of a high sense of national duty. They are to be debarred from the interest of personal contest by the ballot and other means,—but are nevertheless to be constant in voting. The ballot, and the other means, are successful for the required ends,—but the people are indifferent as to the results. It is the boast of Australian politicians that the elections are quiet. They are often too quiet. If it be the case, as a great man once said, that any first six men caught walking through Temple Bar, would make as good members of parliament as any other six men, the South Australian scheme of voting for members of the Legislative Council may be good,—but under no other theory.

I doubt whether South Australia can boast that its parliament contains its best men. Neither do members of the government or members of parliament in any of the Australian colonies have that relation to the country at large which they certainly hold in England. In England the premier is the head man of his country for the time; and in common

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estimation with us, a member of parliament is felt to be a man who has achieved honourable distinction. It is not so in the Australian colonies generally, and certainly is not so in South Australia specially. Prime ministers there have succeeded each other with wonderful celerity. The first parliament with responsible government was opened in Adelaide, on April 22nd, 1857,—not yet sixteen years ago as I write,—and since that date twenty-seven different ministries have been formed. I found that no less than six of these combinations had been made by Mr. Ayres, who was the chief secretary or head of the government when I was in Adelaide,—but even he has succumbed again. There is, however, always this comfort to be extracted from such speedy reverses,—that a quick return of triumph may be expected. When last I heard of the colony Mr. Ayres was out; but very probably he may be again in before this is published.

The real work of government is done in South Australia by the Governor in Council with a cabinet of five. Of these one always sits in the Legislative Council, and the other four are supposed to have seats in the House of Assembly. The constitution requires that no minister shall be in office above three months without a seat either in the Upper or in the Lower House.

The debates are fairly well conducted,—at any rate without riot or that personal abuse and continual appeal to the Speaker which I have witnessed elsewhere. There is much useless and quite vapid talking,—members making speeches without even an attempt at a new point or a new argument, to which no one listens, but which are endured with patience. It is understood that when a gentleman has taken the trouble to get a seat, and is willing to sacrifice his time, he should be allowed to air his voice, and to learn by practice to speak with fluency. Mr. Lowe and Mr. Childers have taught colonial legislators the possible results of such lessons; and why should any man throw away a chance? I heard a debate on the great question of cab-lamps,—whether legislation should content itself with requiring simply cabs to be lighted at nights, or whether it should extend the precaution

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to other vehicles,—on which two-thirds of a full House were eloquent. I heard impassioned eloquence on the question whether the excellent Bishop of Adelaide should be allowed to retain his right of walking out of the room before other people,—a right which, as it came from the Crown, the parliament could not take from him, but which he gracefully abandoned when it gave annoyance to scrupulous politicians. Their minds were much excited on this question. And I heard another debate as to the governor's salary, carried on with much energy. The Lower House, with hot parliamentary zeal expressed in fervid words, decided on cutting off £1,000 a year from the salary of future governors. But the measure of retrenchment, though essentially a money measure, was lost, because no seconder could be found for it in the Upper Chamber.

There was another great debate when I was in the colony,—of which, however, I only heard a small portion, and it gave rise to an incident which I will mention as giving an idea of the feeling displayed towards the House. It was decided, as a new measure, that there should be after-dinner sittings,—and on a certain evening there was an after-dinner sitting. There was a spirited debate, which was conducted with a fair amount of parliamentary animation. One of the leading Adelaide newspapers, giving its history of the affair on the following morning, described the speakers in round terms of having been—unfit for parliamentary work, because they had dined. On the following day one of the gentlemen attacked brought the matter forward on a question of privilege, and there ensued a debate in which it was at any rate shown that the accusation was altogether groundless. But nothing was done. No one seemed seriously to think that the writer of the article, or the editor, proprietor, or printer of the paper, should be punished for the insinuations made. On the next morning the newspaper in question ridiculed the complaining members for having adopted the only meaning of the words of the article which they would bear. I could not but think that had the "Times" or "Daily Telegraph" accused the House of Commons of being generally unfit for its duties because it had—dined,

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that the House of Commons would in some way have made its displeasure felt. But I was anxious to know why such an unwarranted attack should be made by one of the leading newspapers of the colony upon the parliament of the colony,—and I received information on the subject. The newspaper in question had to report the debates, and disliked the trouble and expense of keeping reporters late into the evening.

Few countries can, I think, show a more favourable account of their public financial matters than that exhibited by South Australia. Custom duties are the only taxation to which her people are subject, and the amount paid by them in that shape averages no more than 25*s.* a head. On the 31st December, 1871, the population was 189,018, and the duties levied in 1871 had amounted to £234,980. The total revenue in that year had been £785,489, and the total expenditure £759,339. But the revenue so stated is made up of various sums, which have no reference whatever to taxation. It includes the gross amounts received from the post-office, from the railways, from the telegraph offices, and from the water-works;—whereas the total of the expenditure includes the expenses of those establishments. The revenue includes also the money carried to the public credit for the sale and lease of lands, which I find estimated for 1872 at £145,000. The public debt amounted to £1,944,600 on the 31st December, 1871, which had been chiefly,—I believe entirely,—expended on public works. One hundred and thirty-three miles of railway had been opened in the country, the working of which in 1871 had cost £88,000,—and which had produced £111,000 by its traffic, thus giving £23,000 as dividends on the cost, and paying about a quarter of the interest on the total of the public debt.

In what I have said it will, I fear, be thought that I have intended to depreciate the parliament of the colony. I have not sought to do so, but I am merely giving my personal impressions of what I heard and saw. Parliaments, like puddings, should be judged by the proof of their results, as shown in the eating. One of the main works of all

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parliaments is so to adjust the financial affairs of the country entrusted to it, that the people shall not suffer from over-taxation, that the public credit shall be maintained, and that a sufficiency of revenue shall be collected to insure the safety and general well-being of the community. If this be adequately done, a parliament need certainly not be ashamed of its doings. And this is adequately done in South Australia.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY.

An ingenious but sarcastic Yankee, when asked what he thought of Western Australia, declared that it was the best country he had ever seen to run through an hour-glass. He meant to insinuate that the parts of the colony which he had visited were somewhat sandy. It is sandy. The country round Perth is very sandy. From Freemantle, the seaport, the road up to Perth, the capital, lies through sand. From Albany, the seaport at which the mail steamers stop, the distance to Perth is about 260 miles, and the traveller encounters a good deal of sand on the way. The clever Yankee who thought of the hour-glass probably did not go beyond Perth. There is much soil in Western Australia which is not sandy,—which is as good, perhaps, as any land in the Australian colonies;—but it lies in patches, sometimes far distant from each other; and there is very much desert or useless country between. In this is, probably, to be found the chief reason why Western Australia has not progressed as have the other colonies. The distances from settlement to settlement have been so great as to make it almost impossible for settlers to dispose of their produce. This has been the first great difficulty with which Western Australia has had to contend; and to this have been superadded others: the absence of gold,—an evil not so much in itself as in the

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difference created by the presence of gold in the other colonies, whereby the early settlers in Western Australia were induced to rush away to Adelaide and Melbourne; its remoteness from the populous parts of the Australian continent; the fact that it is not the way from any place to any other place; the denseness and endlessness of its forests; its poisonous shrub, which in many places makes the pasturing of sheep impossible; and the ferocity of the aboriginal tribes when they first encountered their white invaders. These causes have made the progress of Western Australia slow, and have caused the colony to be placed in a category very different from that in which the other colonies are reckoned, and to be looked at from an exceptional point of view.

The other Australian colonies were originally founded on some ground or for some cause special to themselves. New South Wales, which was the first occupied, was selected as a penal settlement for the use of the mother country. Captain Cook had then but lately made himself acquainted with the coast, and had specially recommended Botany Bay to the British Government. Consequently, a young convict world, under the rule of Governor Phillip, was sent to Botany Bay; and finding Botany Bay unsuited for its purposes, the young world settled itself at Port Jackson. From this establishment Van Diemen's Land was an offshoot, first colonised for the same purpose,—that of affording a safe refuge to British criminal exiles. An effort was also made in 1803 to establish a penal settlement near the site on which Melbourne now stands. And indeed the first attempt to set up the British flag on that part of the Australian continent which is now called Western Australia was a step made in the same direction. The governors of Port Jackson, or New South Wales, as it came to be called, having been nearly overwhelmed in their heroic struggles to find food for these convicts fourteen thousand miles away from home, on a land which, as far as they had seen it, was very barren, made a sister settlement, first at Norfolk Island, then in Van Diemen's Land, and thirdly at King George's Sound,—where stands the town of Albany, which place is

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now the Southern District of Western Australia. A small party of convicts, with Major Lockyer as their governor, were stationed here in 1826,—but the convicts were withdrawn from the place when it was recognised as belonging to the established colony of Western Australia. After this fashion and for this reason, that of affording a home to the transported ruffians of Great Britain,—the first Australian settlements were made. South Australia was colonised by private enterprise. Victoria and Queensland were separated from New South Wales to the south and north as they became sufficiently populous and strong to demand to be allowed to stand alone. But Western Australia arose after another fashion. She was colonised because she was there, —not because she was wanted for any special purpose, either by the community at large or by any small section of it. We had claimed, and made good our claim, to call all New Holland, hardly by this time known by the name of Australia, as our own. We had done something on the east coast, something in the southern island; some small attempts had been made to utilise the south generally. There were still the west and the north open to us. The northern coast, which even yet we have hardly touched except for telegraphic purposes, was very hot and very unpromising. But there came news to us that on an estuary which had been named the Swan River, running out into the ocean at about the thirty-second parallel of latitude, in a salubrious climate, a commodious settlement might be formed. News to this effect was brought home by Captain Stirling in 1827, and in 1829 the captain, now promoted to the position of Governor Stirling, returned to the Swan River, and founded the colony,—which dates from 1st June of that year. He was preceded, by a few months, by Captain Freemantle in the "Challenger," who first hoisted the British flag on the spot on which the town of Freemantle now stands. In the month of August the town of Perth, twelve miles up the Swan River, was founded, and in the following month lands were assigned to the new-comers. In that year twenty ships arrived with settlers, stores, several immigrants, and a few soldiers. I do not know that these were specially high-

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minded men, flying from the oppressive rule of an old country, as did the Pilgrim Fathers who were landed from the "Mayflower" on the shores of Massachusetts;—nor that they were gallant, daring spirits, going forth with their lives in their hands, in search either of exceptional wealth or exceptional honour, as has so often been done by the Columbuses and Raleighs of the world. They certainly were not deposited on the shore because they were criminals. They seem to have been a homely crew, who found life at home rather too hard, and who allowed themselves to be persuaded that they could better their condition by a voyage across the world. What was their position, or what might have been their fate had they remained at home, no one now can tell. They certainly did not have light work or an easy time in founding the colony of Western Australia.

Ships continued to come. In 1830 there came thirty-nine ships, with 1,125 passengers, and stores valued at £144,177. I think it right to state that I take my details as to these matters from the early numbers of the "Western Australian Almanac," which surely among almanacs deserves to be placed in the very highest rank. I may say of all Australian almanacs that they are much better than anything of the kind in England, telling one what one does want to know, and omitting matter which no one would read. Among them all, this "Western Australian Almanac" should stand high, and will, I hope, show itself to be as charitable as it is good, by pardoning the freedom with which I purloin its information.

Troubles, heavy troubles, soon arose among the young colonists. The heaviest, probably, of these early troubles came from the not unnatural hostility of the natives. All the first years of the colony's existence were saddened by contests with the blacks—by so-called murders on the part of the black men, and so-called executions on the part of their invaders. Looking at these internecine combats from a distance, and by the light of reason, we can hardly regard as murder,—as that horrid crime which we at home call murder,—the armed attempts which these poor people made to retain their property; and though we can justify the

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retaliations of the white conquerors,—those deeds done in retaliation which they called executions,—we cannot bring ourselves to look upon the sentences of death which they carried out as calm administrations of the law. The poor black wretches understood no pleas that were made against them,—were not alive even to the Christian's privilege of lying in their own defence, and of pleading not guilty. They speared a soldier here and a settler there, ran away with booty, fired houses, and made ravages on women and children, doubtless feeling that they were waging a most righteous war against a most unrighteous and cruel enemy. When caught, they knew that they must suffer. In the old records of the colony, one reads of these things as though all the injuries were inflicted by the blacks and suffered by the whites. Here, at home, all of us believe that we were doing a good deed in opening up these lands to the industry and civilisation of white men. I at any rate so believe. But, if so, we can surely afford to tell the truth about the matter. These black savages were savage warriors, and not murderers; and we too, after a fashion, were warriors, very high-handed, and with great odds in our favour, and not calm administrators of impartial laws.

I do not say that the black men were ill treated. I think that in Western Australia, as in the other colonies, great efforts were made by the leading colonists to treat them well, and, if possible, so to use the country for the purposes of the new-comers as not to injure the position of the old possessors. In this, however, the colonists failed egregiously, and could not probably have avoided failure by any conduct compatible with their main object. It was impossible to explain to the natives that a benevolent race of men had come to live among them, who were anxious to teach them all good things. Their kangaroos and fish were driven away, their land was taken from them, the strangers assumed to be masters, and the black men did not see the benevolence. The new-comers were Christians, and were ready enough to teach their religion, if only the black men would learn it. The black men could not understand their religion, and did not want it; and, to this day, remain unimpressed by any of

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its influences. But the white men brought rum as well as religion, and the rum was impressive though the religion was not. It is common to assert, when we speak of the effect which our colonists have had on uncivilised races, that we have taught them our vices, but have neglected to teach them our virtues. The assertion is altogether incorrect. We have taught them those of our customs and modes of life which they were qualified to learn. To sing psalms, and to repeat prayers, we have been able to teach the young among them. Of any connection between the praises and prayers and the conduct of their lives, I have seen no trace. Many arts they have learned from us, the breaking and training of horses, the use of the gun, the skill and detective zeal of policemen,—for in Western Australia and in Queensland the aborigines are used in this capacity,—and some adroitness in certain crafts, such as those of carpenters and masons. But we have been altogether unable to teach them not to be savage. They will not live in houses except by compulsion. They will not work regularly for wages. They are not awake to the advantages of accumulated property. In their best form they are submissive and irresponsible as children, —in their worst form they are savage and irresponsible as beasts of prey.

Two institutions of a philanthropic nature are maintained in this colony for black men and women, or for black children,—or, as I found to be the case at the one which I visited, for half-caste children. One at New Norcia, which I did not see, is in the hands of the Roman Catholics, and was established by Bishop Salvado. There were, according to the census papers, thirty-four adults and twenty-six children at this place. They are associated with and instructed by a large number of monks, and they are made to follow the ceremonies of the Church to which they are attached, and perhaps to understand them as well as do the white proselytes. And there is a Protestant establishment for the teaching of children at Perth, which was first established at Albany, but which has been transplanted to Perth by the present bishop. Here I found twenty-two children, of whom fourteen were half-caste and eight were natives. For

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each of these the colony paid one shilling a day;—any further expenses incident to the establishment were defrayed by the bishop. The registrar of the colony, in speaking of this establishment in his last annual report,—that for 1870, —says that "it has gone through a varied history of success and disappointment. Several of the young women trained there have, from their educational attainments and knowledge of music, been sent for, and have gone as teachers at missionary stations in the neighbouring colonies, but it is to be regretted that the numbers now under charge do not exceed fourteen." He goes on to say that "the acquirement of a home and property is unknown to the natives of the bush, and it seems essential for the success of any attempt to ameliorate their condition, that this principle should be chiefly promoted and encouraged." I quite agree with this gentleman as to that which would be chiefly essential; but I must say, at the same time, that I never found an aboriginal Australian in possession of a house of which he was himself the owner or tenant. For the establishment at New Norcia, the colonial government allows £100 a year. I was also informed that £50 per annum was allowed for a school maintained for native children by sisters of mercy. Of this latter school I could find no trace.

It is calculated that in the settled districts of the colony, there are at present about three thousand aboriginals, including men, women, and children. That the number is decreasing very quickly there is no doubt. Of these three thousand, nearly seven hundred are supposed to be in the service of the settlers of the colony during some portions of the year,—some for a few days at a time, or for a few weeks, —some perhaps for a few months. They cannot be depended upon for continual service. Their doom is to be exterminated; and the sooner that their doom be accomplished,— so that there be no cruelty,—the better will it be for civilisation.

The black men in Western Australia were certainly not treated with exceptional harshness,—were perhaps treated with exceptional kindness,—but they were very troublesome to the new-comers. There was much of spearing on the

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one side, and much of shooting and hanging on the other. There seem to have been two pertinacious chiefs, or resolute leading natives, named Yagar and Midgegoroo, who gave a great amount of trouble. They carried on the war for four or five years, by no means without success. The records speak of them as horrible savages. They were probably brave patriots, defending their country and their rights. Midgegoroo was at last taken and shot. What was the end of Yagar, or whether he came to an end, no one seems to know.

And there were many other troubles in the young settlement which, as we read the record, make us feel that it was no easy thing to be an early colonist. Food for the new-comers was often wanted. The young crops of wheat, on which so much depended, were destroyed by moths and red rust. There was great lack of any circulating medium. The soil, though good in many places, was good only in patches very distant from each other; and there were no roads,—so that the settler who produced meat in one place could not exchange it for the corn and wheat produced elsewhere. And there was no labour. That of all evils was perhaps the one most difficult to be encountered and overcome. The black man would not work; and the white man who had his block of ground thickly covered with gum-trees and blackboys,—a large resinous shrub common in the country is called by the latter name,—could not clear it and till it and sow it with sufficient rapidity to procure sustenance for himself and family.

It must be remembered in regard to all the Australian colonies that the country, which has proved itself to be exceptionally rich in repaying industrial enterprise, produced almost nothing ready to the hands of the first comers. There were no animals giving meat, no trees giving fruit, no yams, no bread-trees, no cocoa-nuts, no bananas. It was necessary that all should be imported and acclimatized. The quickness with which the country has received the life and products of other countries is marvellous. In some districts of certain Australian colonies,—especially of Victoria and Tasmania,—the English rabbit is already an almost

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ineradicable pest; in others is the sparrow. The forests are becoming full of the European bee. Wild horses roam in mobs of thousands over the distant sheep and cattle stations. In Western Australia grapes of an enormous size are sold retail at a penny a pound. Mutton through the colonies averaged twopence a pound in 1871. But everything was at first brought from Europe, and at first the struggle for existence was very hard.

This struggle was very hard in the first infant days of Western Australia; and there seems often to have arisen the question whether upon the whole it would not be well that the settlement should be abandoned. In 1832 the troubles were so grievous that the governor, Captain Stirling, went home to represent matters. Could not something be done for the poor strugglers? At the end of this year there were only six hundred acres of land under grain, and the reason given for so slight an advance was the difficulty, or almost impossibility, of procuring seed. In 1834 the governor returned as Sir James Stirling, and the struggle went on. In the same year was taken the first step towards that resolution which has since given the colony its present position and reputation, either for good or for bad as it may be. A petition for convicts from home was got up at King George's Sound, where, as has been before stated, a small convict establishment had been settled in early days by the then governor of New South Wales. In Albany, at King George's Sound, the comforts of convict labour seem already to have been appreciated and regretted. This petition, however, was repudiated by the colony at large. The colonists were in a bad way,—but not yet so bad as that. At this time the system of transportation had already become odious to the other colonies,—especially to New South Wales. The stain of the convict element had been felt to be disgraceful, and the very name was repulsive and injurious. But convicts could be made to labour, to open out roads and clear timber and build bridges, and do works without which it is impossible that a young colony should thrive. And the expense of convicts would be borne by the imperial revenue. Convict labour, bad as it might be,

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meant labour for nothing. The mother country, which would give but little else, in her desire to rid herself of her own ruffians, would no doubt give that. It was known that the mother country was hard pressed in that matter, not knowing what to do with her convicted ruffianism, and that she would be only too happy to send a few thousands to the Swan River. But the colony rejected the petition which was originated at King George's Sound, and would not as yet condescend so far.

But things went from bad to worse. In 1838 there was a sad wail. Ten thousand barrels of oil were taken off the coast, but not a barrel was taken by an English or colonial vessel. All this wealth had fallen into the hands of French or American whalers. And the murders went on, and the hangings. And in 1840 all the wheat was destroyed by a moth. There had indeed been glimpses of success. In 1832 a Legislative Council first sat,—nominated of course by the governor; and in the same year a newspaper was published,—in manuscript. Soon afterwards a theatrical entertainment was given, and a printing-press was brought out, and a public clock was set up, and churches were opened. Struggles were made gallantly. Mr. Eyre, who was not so successful afterwards when he went as governor to Jamaica, made his way across the country from South Australia to King George's Sound, through the most sterile region of the continent, performing one of those wonderfully gallant acts by which Australian explorers have made themselves famous. Fresh acres were brought under cultivation. In 1843 the white population had risen to nearly four thousand. But still things were very bad. We are told that in 1844, from scarcity of money and other causes, the colony was in a most depressed condition. In 1845 a second petition for convicts was circulated,—not only at King George's Sound, but throughout the colony. It did not, however, find much favour, and was signed by no more than one hundred and four settlers. The struggle still went on, and on the whole very bravely. A literary institute was proposed, if not opened. There was an exhibition of European fruits grown in the colony. There was some success

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in whaling, instigated no doubt by a feeling of British hatred against those French and Americans who had come with their ships in the early days, and carried off the oil from under the very noses of the colonists. New patches of good land were discovered,—notably in the Toodjay district, about sixty miles from Perth. A subscription of £30 was collected for the poor Irish who were dying at home in want of potatoes. The public revenue in 1849 was £16,000, and the expenditure only £15,800. With £200 in the public chest and no debt, there was clearly a state of public solvency. But still the complaints of the want of labour were very sore, and it is recorded that in 1848 a great number of mechanics and labourers left the colony for South Australia. This was the saddest thing of all, for South Australia was only founded in 1836, whereas Western Australia was seven years her senior.

In 1849 the colony yielded to its fate, and at a public meeting in the capital, with the sheriff in the chair, a deputation was appointed to ask the governor to take steps to make Western Australia a penal settlement. And so the deed was done. Steps were taken which were very quickly successful, and from that time,—or rather from 1st June, 1850, when the first convict arrived, down to 9th January, 1860, when the last convict was put on shore at Freemantle, over 10,000 of these exiles have been sent to a colony which still possesses a population of only 25,000 white persons.

Of this same year, 1849, two other memorable statements are made. It is said that coal was discovered in Western Australia, and that gas admirably fitted for domestic purposes had been extracted from the shrub called the "black-boy." I regret to state that neither the gas nor the coal are at present known in the colony. Whether there be coal or not in this part of Australia is still one of the secrets of nature. Search is being made for it now under government auspices, by the process of boring,—not I fear with much promise of success. I am told that geologists say that there is coal, but that it lies very deep in the earth.

From 1850 down to 1868,—and indeed to the present

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day and for many a day to come,—the history of Western Australia is and will be that of a convict colony. Whether it is well that a young and struggling settlement should be assisted after such a fashion is a question on which they who have studied the subject in regard to Australia differ very much. As regards the colony now under review, I am nclined to think that it could not have been kept alive without extraneous aid; and I do not know what other sufficient extraneous aid could have been given to it. It may be well to explain here that the exportation of convicts to Western Australia was discontinued, not in deference to the wishes of the colony itself, nor because the mother country was tired of sending them,—but because the other colonies complained. The convicts when released got away to South Australia and Victoria,—or, at any rate, the Victorians and South Australians so reported; and thus the stain was still continued to the young Eastern world. The other colonies remonstrated, and therefore convicts are no longer sent to the Swan River.

But there are still in Western Australia nearly 2,000 convicts. On 1st January, 1872, there were exactly 1,985, including holders of tickets of leave and of conditional pardons. In addition to these there are the remainder of the 8,000 who have worked out their sentences,—or, in the language of the colony, have become expirees,—and their families. The whole labour market of the colony, as a matter of course, savours of the convict element. No female convicts were sent out to Western Australia, and therefore an influx of women soon became above all things desirable. Women were sent out as emigrants, in respect of whom great complaint is made by the colony against the government at home. It is said that the women were Irish, and were low, and were not calculated to make good mothers for future heroic settlers. It seems to me that this complaint, like many others made in the colonies generally, has been put forward thoughtlessly, if not unjustly. The women in question were sent that they might become the wives of convicts, and could not therefore have been expediently selected from the highest orders of the English aris-

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tocracy. Another complaint states that the convicts sent there were not convicts of the kind ordered and promised. There was,—so goes the allegation,—a condition made and accepted that the convicts for Western Australia should be convicts of a very peculiar kind, respectable, well-grown, moral, healthy convicts,—who had been perhaps model ploughmen at home,—and men of that class. I have always replied, when the allegation has been made to me, that I should like to see the stipulation in print, or at least in writing. I presume the convicts were sent as they came to hand,—and certainly many of them were not expressly fitted to work on farms at a distance from surveillance. The women, I do not doubt, were something like the men; —and in this way a population not very excellent in its nature was created. But the men worked for nothing.

It is certainly true that the convict element pervades the colony. If you dine out, the probability is that the man who waits upon you was a convict. The rural labourers are ticket-holders,—or expirees who were convicts. Many of the most thriving shopkeepers came out as convicts. There are convict editors of newspapers. A thorough knowledge of the social life of the colony is needed in order to distinguish the free-selecter from him who has been sent out from Great Britain to work out his period of punishment. Men who never were convicts, come under the suspicion of having been so, and men who were convicts are striving to escape from it. The effect is that the convict flavour is over everything, and no doubt many would-be immigrants are debarred from coming to Western Australia by the fear that after a year or two their position would be misconstrued. In this respect a great evil has been done.

But it may be doubted whether the colony would have lived at all without an influx of convicts. They who at last asked for them,—so unwillingly,—were clearly of that opinion. There are many in the colony now who express much regret that the settlement should ever have been contaminated by a criminal class, and who profess to believe that nothing but evil has come from the measure. Such regrets are natural, but cannot be taken as indicating any

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true conception of the difficulties which caused the settlers to ask for convicts. Others declare, and I think with more reason, that the colony could not have lived but for the questionable boon. The parent colony, New South Wales, could not have been founded without convicts. The land was not a land of promise, overflowing with milk and honey. It was a hard land, with much barren soil, often deficient in water, with but few good gifts apparent to the eye of the first comers. The gold was lying hidden and unsuspected among the distant water-courses, and in the bosom of the mountains. The large pastures had to be reached across mountains which were long impervious to explorers. In telling the early tale of New South Wales I have endeavoured to explain how great was the struggle to maintain life on the first settlement; and the struggle was made only because it was necessary to Great Britain that she should find a distant home for her criminal exiles. The convicts were sent; and the attendants on the convicts, with convict assistance, made a new world. The same thing has been done in Western Australia, and the results will at last be the same. As soon as the exiles arrived at the Swan River imperial money fostered and comforted the struggling settlement. Not only was work done by the men who were sent, but for every man sent money was expended. There were imperial officers, comptroller-generals, commissary-generals, commandants, superintendents, surveyors, chaplains, accountants,—all paid from home. And the convicts did work,—not indeed so well or with such result as paid labourers,—but still, after the convict fashion, with considerable effect. If the men individually were bad workmen, yet their number was great. And it was work gratis,—costing the colony nothing. Such roads have been made as the other colonies,—always excepting Tasmania,—do not possess. Public buildings have been erected, and an air of prosperity has been given to the two towns,—Perth and Freemantle, the only towns in the colony,—which could hardly have come to them yet but for this aid. And imperial funds are still spent largely,—though no doubt the money flowing into Western Australia from that source will yearly become less

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and less. The comptroller-general has gone home, and there is doubt whether there will be another comptroller-general. The comfortable and somewhat imposing house, in which the old comptroller used to live, at Freemantle,—in dignity only second to that of the governor,—has been made a hospital. The numbers are decreasing both of officers and men. The head convict establishment is at Freemantle, and the glory of Freemantle is over. The men are no longer allowed to work on distant roads, because the gangs are expensive when kept at a distance. Everybody is talking of retrenchment. The Home Office is still called upon to pay, but can no longer get rid of a single ruffian in this direction, and of course looks closely to the expenditure. In Western Australia generally much blame is thrust upon the government at home because of its parsimony, and hard things are said of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, because it is supposed that he has ordered the withdrawal of the gangs from the roads. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer is a vigorous man, but I hardly think that his vigour has gone so far as this. The retrenchment has probably sprung from the zeal of officers here, who have felt it to be both their duty and their interest to respond to the general demand for economy expressed by their superiors at home. But still there is money coming, and still there is work done; and it may be that this will last till the colony can exist and prosper without further aid. In this respect great good has been done.

Whether more of good or more of evil has befallen Australia generally from its convicts, is a question which will not be decided to the satisfaction of the English world at large for many a year to come,—though the day for a general decision will come. But this may be said of the system with certain truth,—as it may of all human institutions,—that now, when the sweets of it have been used and are no longer sweet, the advantages are forgotten and the evils borne in mind. The Bill Sykes physiognomy of a large proportion of the population is to be seen daily throughout Western Australia. And the roads and buildings are also to be seen. But men remember whence Bill Sykes came,

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and why; but they forget how they got the roads and buildings.

In 1851 the rushes for gold commenced in Victoria and in New South Wales, and before long there came upon Western Australia the conviction that gold was the one thing necessary for its salvation. If gold could only be found, Western Australia would hold up its head with the best of them. Exploring parties were made, and gullies were ransacked,—I will not say altogether in vain, for I have seen small grains of gold which were undoubtedly washed out of Western Australian earth;—but no gold was found to repay the searchers. In 1862 a reward of £5,000 was offered for the discovery of a gold-field that would pay, within a radius of fifty miles of Perth; but no lucky man has claimed the reward. In the same year an offer was made to the colony by Mr. Hargreaves,—one of those who claim to have first discovered gold in Australia, and who possessed the credit of having found it, not by accident, but by search made in consequence of geological comparison instituted by himself between California and Australia. The great Mr. Hargreaves proposed to come to Western Australia and search for a gold-field, on condition that £500 and his expenses were paid to him. The colony at once accepted the proposition. If gold could only be found, what would be £500 and Mr. Hargreaves's expenses? Towards the end of the year Mr. Hargreaves came, and started to the north, for the Murchison River. If anywhere, gold might be there. Such seems to have been Mr. Hargreaves's opinion. But in the January following Mr. Hargreaves returned to Perth unsuccessful. The colony, no doubt, paid the stipulated price,—and wept again as it has wept so often. It has since sent, in the same way, for other expensive aids from beyond its own limits, for machinery and skilled science; the machinery and skilled science have come, and the poor colony has paid the bill;—but there have been no results.

From that day to this the craving for gold has continued,—and is still strong as ever. It is the opinion of many that nothing but gold can turn the scale, can bring joy out

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of despondency, can fill the land with towns, and crowd the streets with men. And there is much truth in the belief. It is not the gold that does it,—the absolute value of the metal which is extracted,—but the vitality to trade, the consumption of things, the life and the stir occasioned by those who, with the reckless energy of gamblers, hurry hither and thither after the very sound of gold. The men come, and must live,—and must work for their livelihood, if not in getting gold, then on some other work-field. The one thing wanted is population. Gold, if really found in paying quantities, would be a panacea for all evils in the colony; but, if that be impossible, even tidings of gold, tidings loud enough to gain credit, might turn the scale.

It may easily be conceived that such hopes as these,—hopes which might be gratified any day by an accident, but which could not assure themselves of success by steady industry,—would lead to a state of feeling which I may best describe as the Micawber condition. If only gold would turn up! Gold might turn up any day! But as gold did not turn up,—then would not Providence be so good as to allow something else to turn up? This feeling, than which none can be more pernicious, is likely to befall every population which seeks after hidden and uncertain gains. The gain may come any day,—may come in any quantity,—may turn squalid poverty into wealth in an hour. The splendid transformation has been made over and over again, and may be repeated. Why should it not be repeated here, with me, on my behalf? And, if so, how vain, feeble, and contemptible would be a paltry struggle after daily wages? No doubt there was much of the Micawber spirit in the colony, and many waited, thinking that gold would turn up,—or if not gold, pearls, or coal, or copper, or gas made out of blackboys. For there have been promises made by the cruel earth of all these brilliant things.

By the earth or by the water;—for perhaps the promise of pearls has been, of all these promises, the one best performed. In 1861 I find the mention of mother-of-pearl found on the northern coast, at Nickol Bay,—far away beyond the limits of the colony which had been explored,

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but which was geographically a portion of the seacoast of Western Australia. Now there is a settlement at Nickol Bay. At present horses and sheep are reared there; but Nickol Bay is best known for its pearl fishery. This has gradually increased. In 1862 pearl-shell was exported to the value of £250. In 1863, none. In 1864, £5. In 1865, none. In 1866, £7. In 1867, £556. In 1868, £5,554. In 1869, £6,490. For 1870 I have not the amount. In 1871 it arose to £12,895. This enterprise can hardly be regarded as having been carried on by colonial industry, as strangers have come to the coast, and pearl-divers are men of migratory habits, who know little of homes, and are not subject to much patriotic enthusiasm; but they attach themselves for a time to the coast that is nearest to them, and spend upon it some portion of their gains. The fishery on the northern coast of Western Australia, not for pearls, but for pearl-shell, will probably become a prosperous trade.

The staple of the colony has no doubt been wool,—and it appears to have been the original idea of the wealthier settlers to carry out in Western Australia the system of squatting which had already become successful on the eastern side of the continent. The value of wool exported is more than half that of all the exports of the colony. In 1871 it amounted to £111,061,—which was shorn from the backs of 671,000 sheep. But these figures cannot be taken as indicating any great success. I could name five stations in Queensland on which more sheep are kept than run through all the pastures of Western Australia. It is common in Western Australia to hear of squatters with 2,000, 3,000, or 4,000 sheep. In the eastern colonies I found it unusual to find less than 10,000 on a single run. I heard of one leviathan squatter in Western Australia, who owned 25,000 sheep. In Queensland, New South Wales, or Victoria, 30,000 is by no means a large number of sheep for a single run,—as the reader of the previous pages will know very well by this time, if he have read attentively. There are various reasons for this comparative smallness of things. The colony has never been popular. It began

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poorly, and has been since succoured by convicts. It is remote from the other pastoral districts of Australia, and divided from them by a large impassable desert. And there are large districts infested by a poisonous shrub, which is injurious to horses and deadly to cattle if eaten green, but which is absolutely fatal to sheep. The traveller comes on these districts here and there, and some one picks for him a sprig of the plant,—with a caution that, if he eats much of it, it will probably disagree with him. I withstood all temptation in that direction, and ate none. From land wanted for agricultural purposes, the poisonous shrub is easily eradicated; but the cost of doing this over the wide districts required for pastoral purposes would be too great. The baneful localities are known, and the number of sheep poisoned are few; but the fact that so much land should be unserviceable is of course adverse to squatting.

The timber trade has thriven in Western Australia, and at the present moment is so much in request that complaints are made that the available labour of the colony is all taken into the bush, to the great detriment of the farmer. Hitherto the chief exportation has been of sandal-wood, which in 1871 amounted to £26,926. In 1869 it had risen to £32,998. This goes almost entirely to the east,—to Singapore and China,—and is, I am told, chiefly used there for incense. But the trade in jarrah-wood, which hitherto has been small, will probably soon take the lead. Tramroads are being laid down in two places, with the view of taking it out from the forests to the seacoast. The wood is very hard, and impervious to the white ants and to water. It is a question whether any wood has come into man's use which is at the same time so durable and so easily worked. It may be that, after all, the hopes of the West Australian Micawbers will be realised in jarrah-wood.

The first object of the first settlers was of course to grow wheat. In any country that will produce a sufficiency of wheat men may live and thrive. Western Australia will produce wheat, and contains many patches of country which, from the nature of the soil, seem to be specially fit for cereal crops. The heat on the western coast is not

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continuous, nor so intense as it is at the same latitudes in New South Wales and Queensland; but, nevertheless, failure in the wheat crops has been one of the chief sources of misfortune and failure in the colony. One reads constantly of rust and moth, and of the insufficiency of the grain produced, and even of the difficulty of procuring seed. The farming has been thoroughly bad, and very bad it is still.

From the commencement of the settlement up to the present day Western Australia has been a crown colony, or, in other words, has been subject to rule from home instead of ruling itself. A governor has been appointed to it, whose duty it has been to initiate such changes in the laws as have appeared necessary to him, and as have met with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He has had a Legislative Council, which was nominated by himself, and therefore subject to him; and, of course, an Executive Council, consisting of paid officers who have done the departmental work for him. Under this scheme of government the colonists themselves had nothing to do with the manner in which they were ruled. The governor was irresponsible to them, but responsible to the government at home. It may be that such a form of rule may be good for an infant community. For an adult colony it cannot be good. How far it has already been altered under the sanction of the present governor, Mr. Weld, I will endeavour to explain in another chapter, and will also speak of the further changes which are in prospect. The absolute power attaching to the governor of a crown colony is already, happily, a thing of the past in Western Australia.

I will also postpone to another chapter such account as I may be able to give of alienation from the Crown of lands of the colony. The manner in which this should be done, and the manner in which it has been and shall be done, have been of all questions the most important to the Australian colonies generally. As a new law on this subject was proclaimed in March, 1872, when I was in the colony, and as the changes made are of vital importance, I will endeavour

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to explain the present condition of the matter when speaking of the colony as it now is.

And thus Western Australia has struggled on since 1829, having undergone many difficulties; not much heard of in the world; never doomed like Sierra Leone or Guiana; never absolutely ruined as have been some of the West Indian Islands;—but never cropping up in the world, an offspring to be proud of, as are Victoria and Canada.

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CHAPTER II.

ROTTNEST AND FREEMANTLE.

ROTTNEST is an island some twelve miles distance from Freemantle, and Freemantle is the seaport town nearest to Perth,—very deficient in its qualifications in that respect, as I shall explain hereafter. The two places are now spoken of together as containing two convict establishments,—that at Rottnest for black men or aboriginals, and that at Freemantle for European and colonial white prisoners. I will speak of Rottnest first, because it was established for its present purposes before convicts were sent out from England to Western Australia.

The island is about four miles long and two miles broad, and was originally almost covered with bush. The soil is sand throughout. Here and there through one end of the island there are five or six small salt lakes. Here black convicts were confined and made to work very soon after the colony was first established. In the course of a few years they were taken to the mainland, in order that they might be employed on the roads. But they ran away, and could not by any amount of chaining and repression which was compatible with work be kept from escaping. Then the establishment at Rottnest was reopened, and has since been maintained as a penal settlement for black convicts, who have been regularly tried and condemned in accordance with British law. When I visited Rottnest there were sixty-five of these aboriginals in the island,—not a large number, perhaps hardly sufficient to justify any special mention; but the special mention is made because it seemed to me that the black men whom I saw in the prison were very much

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nearer to a state of civilization, and were upon the whole in a better condition, and indeed happier, than any whom I encountered in other conditions. Of course they desired their liberty, though by no means with that pining desire which creates brooding melancholy; but they were clothed and fed and housed, and constrained to work,—though by no means to work heavily,—and had assumed the look and bearing of human beings. They were not subject, either by night or day, to solitary confinement,—except in cases of outrage and insubordination, and such cases did not often occur. They had a regular dietary,—twelve ounces of meat a day properly cooked, with rice and bread and tea. By their labour wheat was produced from the sand, and barley, and hay. The wheat was thrashed and ground, and of course baked on the island. The only white labour employed was that of six European convicts borrowed from the opposite establishment at Freemantle, to do portions of the work for which black men could not be trained to sufficient skill. These prisoners also made salt from the salt lakes, which is sold on the mainland, and which may be made in such quantity as to pay the expense of the whole establishment. For superintending the salt-works a white man is employed at a salary,—who was himself a convict not long since. I was informed that the produce of the island obtained by the work of the prisoners defrayed the whole expenses of the establishment, except the salaries of the officers. There is a governor, with five warders, and a doctor. There is no chaplain, nor is any attempt made to Christianize these savages. I believe that any such attempt, and that the presence of any chaplain, would be misplaced and useless. I know that for saying this I shall have against me the opinion of many good men,—of the very men whose good opinion I should be most proud to win,—but I do not believe in the result of the Christian teaching which these men are able to receive. Nor does it strike me with any special horror that sixty-five savages should be left without this teaching, when I know it to have been the will of God that hundreds of thousands such as they should die without it in their own countries.

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But here, at Rottnest, the aboriginal convicts do work, and work cheerfully. On Sundays they are allowed to roam at will through the island, and they bring home wallabys, and birds, and fishes. At night they are locked up in cells, never less than three together, and are allowed blankets for bedding. It was the nearest approach that I saw to black adult civilisation, — though made through crimes and violence. And here I must again express an opinion, that the crime and the violence of these men have altogether a different effect on the mind of the bystander than have the same deeds when done by white men. As we condemn them for much in that they are savages, so must we acquit them of much for the same reason. Our crimes are often their virtues; but we make them subject to our laws,—of which they know little or nothing,—and hang them or lock them up for deeds for which they are not criminal in their own consciences, and for the non-performance of which they would be condemned by their own laws. I was astonished to find how large a proportion of these black prisoners had been convicted of murder;—and that the two who were awaiting their trial were both accused of that crime. But these murders were chiefly tribal retributions. A man in some tribe is murdered, or perhaps simply dies. It is then considered necessary that the next tribe should lose a man,—so that things might be made equal; and some strong young fellow is told off to execute the decision of the elders. Should he refuse to do so, he is knocked about and wounded and ill treated among his own people. But if he perform the deed entrusted to him, he is tracked down by a black policeman, is tried for murder, and has a life-sentence passed against him. When examined as to these occurrences they almost invariably tell the truth;—never endeavouring to screen themselves by any denial of the murder done, or by the absence of sufficient evidence; but appealing to the necessity that was laid upon them. Such an account one of those in prison, who was to be tried, gave to me in the governor's presence,—which was much as follows, though at the time demanding interpretation, which I hope the reader will not need:—"Him come,"—him being some

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old chief in the tribe;—"him say, 'Go kill Cracko;'"—Cracko being the destined victim;—"me no like; him say, 'must;' me no like very much; him hab spear;"—then there was a sign made of the cruel chief wounding his disobedient subject;—"then me go kill Cracko."—"With a tomahawk?" suggests the governor. The prisoner nods assent, and evidently thinks that the whole thing has been made clear and satisfactory. In very many cases the murderer is acquitted, as the judge very properly refuses to take the prisoner's story as a plea of guilty, and demands that the crime shall be proved by evidence. If the evidence be forthcoming the young murderer is sent to Rottnest with a life-sentence, and,—as I think,—enters on a much more blessed phase of existence than he has ever known before.

In the evening it was suggested that the prisoners should "have a corroboree" for the amusement of the guests, and orders were given accordingly. At that time I had never seen a corroboree,—and was much interested, because it was said that a special tribe from which sixteen or eighteen of these men came were very great in corroborees. A corroboree is a tribal dance in which the men congregate out in the bush, in the front of a fire, and go through various antics with smeared faces and bodies, with spears and sticks, howling, and moving their bodies about in time;—while the gins, and children, and old people sit round in a circle. I am told that some corroborees are very interesting. I probably never saw a good one,—as I did not find them to be amusing. This corroboree in the Rottnest prison was the best I saw,—but even in that there was not much to delight. When the order was given, I could not but think of other captives who were desired to sing and make merry in their captivity. Here, however, there was no unwillingness,—and when I proposed that five shillings' worth of tobacco should be divided among the performers, I was assured that the evening would be remembered as a very great occasion in the prison.

I did not find the establishment for white convicts at Freemantle at all as interesting as that at Port Arthur in Tasmania. Port Arthur is in itself very picturesque and

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beautiful. Freemantle has certainly no natural beauties to recommend it. It is a hot, white, ugly town, with a very large prison, a lunatic asylum, and a hospital for ancient worn-out convicts. No doubt the excitement which one expects to feel in such a place is supposed to be aroused rather by the nature of its inmates and by their treatment, than by any outside accessories;—but the outside accessories of Port Arthur no doubt had a strong effect. And at Port Arthur I met with men who interested me, and with whom I have endeavoured to interest others. At Freemantle there was hardly a man whom it can be worth the reader's while to have introduced to him. Perhaps that stipulation of which I have spoken, that none but respectable convicts should be sent to Western Australia, may have produced the undesirable effect of which I speak. I can call to mind no special individual except a gentleman whom I remembered to have been tried in England for having got the mate of one of his ships to scuttle the ship out at sea. I saw him walking about with a very placid demeanour, and perhaps his friends may be glad to hear that he was conducting himself in a most exemplary manner. I do not doubt but that he will be editor of a newspaper before long. It was interesting, too, to see tobacco served out to all the European convicts who had not been re-convicted since their arrival. Such men are called probationers, and seem to have considerable privileges,—as though there were much virtue in coming out to the colony and working there gratis, with all expenses paid by the government at home. The poor black fellows only get tobacco on such a very rare holiday occasion as that I have described; but the white men from England, who had scuttled ships and the like, get their weekly supply regularly,—as gentlemen should. I own that I grudged it them.

At Port Arthur I saw men in solitary cells, who had been there long, who would be there long,—who had spent almost their lives either in solitude or under the lash. At Freemantle there were only two or three in the cells, and they only for a day or two each. I rather complained of this to the officer who was showing me the place, giving him to

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understand that I had expected something more exciting. He had, he said, one man locked up for making himself generally objectionable, whom I could see if I liked; but he warned me, that if I did see him, I might find it very difficult to check his eloquence. The cell was opened, and the man came out and made his speech;—or so much of it as we would consent to hear. At last the warder explained to him that his indulgence could not be prolonged, and he was gently put back, and locked up again. I was assured that he would have gone on for hours;—but there was nothing interesting in his speech, whereas the eloquent prison lawyer at Port Arthur delighted me by the malignity and audacity of the charges which he brought against everybody.

The large prison at Freemantle is fitted to hold 850 prisoners. I do not know that so many have ever been confined there. The men, as they have arrived, seem to have been told off into gangs, and the majority of them have been employed at distances from the head-quarters,—chiefly on the construction of roads. When I was in the colony there were still such gangs, some on one road, and some on another; but the system of so employing the men was being brought to a close, because their cost was greater when thus spread about the country than when maintained at one centre establishment. This was declared to be the case, and the allegation was made that the reduction was forced upon the colony by home parsimony. The allegation was made, but did not reach me from official lips,—and I do not believe that they who have the management of the convicts, the governor and comptroller, have ever received orders to put the men to comparatively useless works, in order that the money spent upon them from Great Britain might be lessened. I do not doubt but that general, and perhaps stringent, instructions have been given as to economy. In what branch of the public service have not such instructions been given during the last four or five years? But the zeal which has complied with these instructions by withdrawing the men from the distant and more useful works has probably been colonial, and is, I think, to be lamented. As

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the colony has had the convicts, it should at any rate get from them all that it can get;—and even though the small extra expense of keeping the men in distant gangs should be borne by the colony itself, the money would be well expended. The matter will probably seem to be insignificant. It is perhaps necessary that a man should visit such a colony as Western Australia before he can realise the need of roads. The distance from Albany to Perth is 258 miles. Perth is the capital of the colony, and Albany is the port from and to which is made the only communication by steamboat with the outside world which the colony possesses. About a third of this road has been properly made. The remaining two-thirds consist of a cleared track through the bushes, with bridges here and there, and occasional attempts at road-making. It would be much better that the road should be finished. In the colony there are many excellent roads running out of Perth, without which the colony would be altogether uninhabitable;—and they were all made by convict labour. I mention the two facts in order that I may be excused for dilating upon the subject.

The prison, which, as I have said, can hold 850 inmates, now contains 359 men. Of these 240 are imperial convicts,—convicts who have been sent out from England, and who are now serving under British sentences, or sentences inflicted in the colony within twelve months of the date of their freedom. For all these the expense is paid from home. And there are 119 colonial convicts,—convicts with whom the colony is charged, as being representatives of colonial crime. But even of these about four-fifths came to Western Australia originally as convicts from home. I cannot tell the extent of the charge upon the imperial revenue,—as I did in regard to the establishment in Tasmania,—because at Freemantle the affair is managed on a different basis. At Port Arthur the colony supplies everything, and receives so much a head for the men. At Freemantle the home government does the work for itself in detail, sending out stores from England, and making purchases for itself.

I suggested to the superintendent of the prison that the enormous building through which we were walking would

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soon become useless. He scouted the idea, and declared, apparently with pride, that the colony would always supply a sufficiency of convicts to keep it going. I suggested that 850 men under sentence would be a great many,—that even half that number would be a very great number,—in a population of 25,000 souls; and the more so, as the enormous distances in the colony made it necessary that other prisons and penitentiaries should be maintained. But he was still hopeful. The population would increase, and with the population crime. It was not likely that a people whose connection with prisons had been so long and so thorough should fail Freemantle at a pinch. I could not agree with him. I do believe that the prison at Freemantle will become all but useless,—as will also that at Port Arthur.

As to the treatment of the men at this establishment, there can be no doubt that it should be held to be free from any charge of harshness. The question is, whether the men be not too well treated. The food is sufficient, and very good. The work is always lighter than that done by free labourers. The utensils and bedding are good. Everything is clean. The punishments are light and infrequent. Flogging still does take place, but very rarely. The men, if they behave well, are allowed more hours of amusement than fall to the lot of freemen;—and have as many means of amusement as most free labourers. It was only half-past five in the evening when I saw the men marshalled at the end of their day's work to receive their tobacco. Why a man who had come from England with a life-sentence against him should receive tobacco, whereas a colonial prisoner sent in for six months should have none, I could not understand.

In the old days, when Norfolk Island was the doubly penal establishment attached to our first penal settlement at Port Jackson, when the managers of these prisons had not yet learned the way to extract work from unwilling convicts without flogging them, penal servitude was no doubt a horrid punishment. Chains and the scourge, darkness and bread and water, were then common. That wretch whom I saw at Tasmania,—who told me that for forty years he had

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never known one day's freedom,—had been made what he was by the old system. I do not remember that he had ever been a thief, but he had always been a rebel. The manner of the thing is altogether altered now, till one finds one's self driven to ask whether punishment so light can be deterrent. As regards our connection with the colonies, the question is not one of much importance, as we shall never send another convict to Australia.

I cannot finish this chapter without giving the copy of a certificate which was handed to me by a policeman at Albany, just as I was about to leave the colony :—

"I hereby certify that the bearer, A. Trollope, about to proceed to Adelaide per A. S. N. Co.'s steamer, is not and never has been a prisoner of the Crown in Western Australia.

(Signed) ————————

"Resident Magistrate."

It is perhaps something of a disgrace to Western Australia that the other colonies will not receive a stranger from her shores without a certificate that the visitor has not been a "lag." Such a resolution on their part must remind the poor Western Australians grievously of their disgrace. So many have been convicts, that the certificate is demanded from all! But I think that they should not charge a shilling for it, and thus raise a revenue out of their own ill fame. It was not my fault that South Australia demanded the certificate. Considering all the circumstances, I think that they should give the passport, and say nothing about it.

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CHAPTER III.

PRESENT CONDITION.

I LEARN from a little book, written by Mr. W. H. Knight, and published in Perth, on the history, condition, and prospects of Western Australia, that the colony, "as defined by her Majesty's Commissioners, includes all that portion of New Holland situated to the westward of the 129th degree of longitude, and extends between the parallels of 13° 44' and 35° south, its greatest length being 1,280 miles from north to south, and its breadth from east to west about 800 miles. The area is about 1,000,000 square miles, or about eight times the size of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland." The total population on December 31, 1871, as given in the Blue Book published in 1872, was 25,353. On the 31st March, 1870, the population, as taken by the census, had been 24,785. For a young colony that can only thrive by an increasing population, the figures are not promising; and they are the less so, in that the latter number may be probably taken as exact, whereas the former, showing the increase, has been matter of calculation. In such calculations there is always a bias towards the more successful side. With an area so enormous, and a population so small, the value and distribution of the land form together the one all-absorbing question. The new-comers arrive intending to live out of the land, which at any rate is plentiful;—and as new-comers are not plentiful, it is necessary to tempt them with offers of land. In all the Australian colonies the system has been the same, although it has been carried out with various limits and various devices. In the early days of

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Western Australia very large grants indeed were given on compliance by different individuals with certain stipulations as to the number of emigrants imported and value of stock and goods brought into the colony. The following grants were made :—

To Mr. Thomas Peel.	250,000 acres.
To Colonel Latour	103,000 „
To Sir James Stirling	100,000 „

I need hardly say that the estates thus conferred were very extensive, and such as would together constitute a county in England. The county of Berkshire contains only 481,280 acres. But it has not appeared that grants on this scale have done good to the colony, or to those to whom they were made. In neither of the cases above named has any prosperous settlement been established on the lands granted, nor, as I believe, have the families of the recipients been enriched, or permanently settled in the country. It was soon found that land divided into smaller quantities would more probably produce the energy which was wanted, and other schemes were invented. The grants above named were made under an order issued from the Colonial Office called Circular A, which was in existence prior to the regular settlement of the colony. Circular B was issued in 1829, and entitled settlers to free grants of land at the rate of one acre for every sum of 1*s.* 6*d.* invested on the land,—the land to be made over in fee at the end of twenty-one years, if the improvements effected satisfied the government. But this was soon again changed, and Circular C granted land on and from 1st January, 1831, to all settlers, at the rate of an acre for every 3*s.* invested, and 100 acres for every servant introduced into the colony, limiting the time of improvement to four years. But on the 1st March, 1831, Circular D appeared, doing away with all free grants,—excepting to officers of the army and navy retiring from their profession with the intention of becoming settlers,—and substituting for such free grants the sale of the crown lands at a minimum price of 5*s.* an acre. In July, 1841, the price of the crown lands was raised to 12*s.* an acre; and subsequently, in the

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same year, to 20*s.* an acre,—which may be called the normal Australian price, though variations have been made upon it in all the Australian colonies;—and, at this rate of 20*s.* an acre, it was to be sold in blocks of not less than 160 acres each, with a right of commonage attached to each block. In 1843 another change was made, which, however, did not alter the price, but had reference to the maximum and minimum limits of land which might be purchased. In 1860 the price was again reduced to 10*s.*, and the quantity to 40 acres. Then, in 1864, came further alteration, and other laws were enacted, which were those in operation at the time of my visiting the colony, but which were again changed while I was there. Under the regulations of 1864 lands were classified as town, suburban, country, and mineral. Town and suburban lands, the value of which was of course dependent on the prosperity of the so-called town, and on the nature of the land around it, were saleable by auction, the upset or reserve price being fixed by the governor. Mineral lands, or lands known or supposed to contain minerals, were saleable in lots not less than 80 acres each, at £3 an acre. The ordinary country lands,—land, that is, which might be selected here or there by the immigrant or other intending purchaser,—were again to be sold at 10*s.* an acre, and in blocks of not less than 40 acres each. It is as to land of this nature,—the ordinary land of the country left open for inspection,—that the emigrant should interest himself. The same law of 1864 also defined the term under which pastoral lands should be let by the Crown in the various districts of the colony, being in one district at the rate of 20*s.* per 1,000 acres, and in another 10*s.*,—with various other stipulations. But the pastoral squatter's relations with the Crown are of much less interest to him than are those of the free-selecter or purchaser. This last law of 1864, as did all previous land laws in the colony, require that the purchaser should pay his money down. At first indeed there were free grants under certain stipulations, then 5*s.* an acre was charged, then 12*s.*, then 20*s.*, then 10*s.*, —but in each case the money was to be paid at once. In this way during the eleven years up to 1869 inclusive,

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117,854 acres were alienated in the colony, showing an average of something over 10,000 acres a year. For this the Crown,—or we may more safely say the colony,—received £69,440—or an average of about £6,300 per annum. The absolute price realised was about *12s. 6d.* an acre; but the sale had been very slow,—the injury arising from which was to be found, not in the smallness of the money received, which was and is a question of quite second-rate importance, but in the absence of inducement to immigrants, of which it seemed to be evidence. There is the land, undoubtedly in many districts so fertile as to offer to new-comers the means of living easily upon its bounties,—producing wheat, oats, barley, grapes, potatoes, with ordinary fruits and vegetables in abundance; with a climate preferable to Englishmen to any other Australian climate except that of Tasmania; certainly with many drawbacks, the chief of which is the distance from each other of the districts which are so gifted;—but still a country with all these gifts. How shall men be induced to come to it, and partake of its good things?

I cannot say that the question is asked by the colony at large in any spirit of wide philanthropy, or that it is asked eagerly, as it is, by those in whose hands rests the government of the colony, with any special view to benefit the hungry labourers of England and Ireland. In Western Australia it is simply a question of self-preservation. I do not know that any good can be done by soft words in the matter. The colony has never prospered as yet, and is not prospering at present. I have endeavoured in a previous chapter to show, if not the reason for the fact, at any rate the fact itself. At first a scanty population spread itself over a wide district, and, having no extraneous help to foster it, was on the brink of perishing by its own natural weakness. Then it called for extraneous help, and received it in the guise of convicts. But the very aid was an injury,—which has still to be endured, and, if possible, gradually cured. Convicts do not make a colony popular with intending colonists. Gold makes a colony popular; but gold has not been found in Western Australia. Coal makes any land prosperous; but coal has not been found in Western Aus-

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tralia. Good harbours assist a colony,—and Western Australia has a magnificent harbour at King George's Sound;—but it is 260 miles from the capital, and is divided from the capital by an uninteresting and useless country. The so-called harbour near to the capital, that at Freemantle, is simply a road in which vessels cannot lie safely. Struggling against these evils, the colony has not hitherto prospered;—but the question still arises whether something further may not be done to induce men to settle on its shores and till its lands, and gather its grapes and figs, and make themselves fat with its fatness. There are two things which may yet be tried, say the governors and those who are interested,—which may be tried, perhaps, with some greater confidence than can be placed in the Micawber hope for gold, and coal, and pearls. Let us have representative government, and let us have another land law. The new land law has been passed and proclaimed; and the condition of the government is a state of transit, being at present half Crown condition and half representative condition. These at present are the two great panaceas.

As to the land, I have no doubt that the governors are right. I use the word in the plural number, as I neither wish to give to any man the glory which should be another's, or to take from any man the glory that is his, and I am not at all aware how far this gentleman or that is responsible for the new regulations. I will postpone to the next chapter my endeavour to explain the new law, or that part of it which may be important to emigrants, as in this chapter I am desirous of confining myself to the present condition of the colony. The law, though proclaimed when I was there, had not so come into operation that any action had been taken under it. The intermediate step between Crown government and representative government had already been taken, and had produced effects. This step I believe I may safely attribute to Mr. Weld, the present governor of the colony, and my readers will understand that I should not mention his name, did I not thoroughly agree and sympathize with him in his efforts to do away with a fashion of government under which I believe that Englishmen will never prosper.

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The other Australian colonies are governed by responsible ministers under irresponsible governors, each with two legislative chambers, of which the larger and more influential is elected, and the other is either elected, as in Victoria, or nominated by the leading colonial minister, as in New South Wales. In these larger colonies the kings, lords, and commons to which we are accustomed at home, are repeated, though there is an overriding power in the Secretary of State at home which somewhat clips the wings of these colonial parliaments, and robs them of that omnipotence which is the great attraction of our own Houses. But Western Australia is still a Crown colony. The governor is responsible, and his advisers, as such, are not so. Legislation takes its initiation with him. He is supposed, in truth, to govern, whereas governors in the other colonies are ornamental vice-sovereigns, whose business it is to superintend society, and to be the medium of communication between the great minister at home and the smaller ministers in the colonies. But in Western Australia at present the governor does not quite govern in the true Crown-colony fashion. Under the auspices of the present governor, and with the consent of the Secretary of State at home, an intermediate condition of things has been reached which is intended to pave the way to responsible government. There is an executive council, of course, —as there always has been,—consisting of the governor himself and four officers, of whom the colonial secretary is supposed to be the leading spirit. These gentlemen form the governor's cabinet. But there is also a legislative council,—a parliament with one house,—of which six members are nominated by the government and twelve are elected by the different districts of the colony. Of the six nominated members, three, but not more than three, may belong to the executive council, and be paid servants of the Crown. This chamber is nominated and elected for three years. It sat for the first time in November, 1870, and was deposed after a second session early in 1872, in consequence of a change in the adjustment of the right of voting. A re-election was about to take place when I was in the colony. The last session had, I was told, been rather stormy. The

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next, it was thought, would be less so. As things stand at present, the governor can effect nothing without the House, nor can the House effect anything without the governor. It is not so with us or in the other colonies,—as all who understand parliamentary action are aware. The governor of Western Australia is under no obligation to accede to the wish of the people as expressed by the House; but the House has the power of voting supplies, and can, of course, cause this power to be felt.

Such a confused condition of governing and legislating,—for it is, in truth, a confused condition,—can only be justified by the inexpediency of rushing at once from the secure but repressing despotism of a Crown colony to the unpractical energies of a full-fledged, double-housed parliament, with responsible ministers, who shall go in and out in accordance with the majorities of the day. The feeling of the present governor, and of the minister at home, is, no doubt, in favour of the full-fledged representation system; but in so small a colony,—in a colony with a sparse population, scattered over an immense area,—there must necessarily be great difficulty in finding men fit to be legislators. And they who may, after a while, become fit, have as yet had but slender means of learning how legislation should be conducted. The system, as at present adopted, which will hardly bear strict investigation on its own merits, may probably be found useful in giving the necessary training to the leading men of the colony, and in bringing them by degrees into the ways of discreet legislation. I must confess that in Western Australia one hears of doings in days not far remote which lead one to think that any amount of ignorance in a legislator, that any amount of what I may, perhaps, call rowdyism in a chamber, is better than practically irresponsible power in the hands of a would-be mighty colonial officer, removed from home by half the world's circumference.

I do not wish to be understood to say that I look to responsible representative government as a panacea for all the evils with which Western Australia is afflicted, or that I think that a colony which would perish without that remedy would by that alone be saved from ruin. I have no such

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belief in any form of government. It is in Western Australia, as elsewhere, by the people and their energy that the people must be made to flourish. But I do think that a people who are empowered to act for themselves in politics, even though their political action should in many instances be unwise, are more likely to be stirred to energy than are a herd of men driven this way or that in matters of policy, according as some men from without may choose to drive them. I am aware that a population of 25,000 is very small to support, very small to need, all the paraphernalia of a double-housed parliament; Queensland, however, had not so many when she commenced the experiment, and with Queensland it has succeeded. I am aware that there is at present great difficulty in getting proper men for the position of legislators in Perth;—perhaps I may go further, and say that as yet these are not to be found in the colony. Men are wanted who can yearly afford to give a portion of their time in the capital for nothing, who shall have trained themselves to think, as legislators, of their country's good, and not of their own special wants, and who shall be possessed of that patient demeanour and forbearing temper which a legislative chamber demands. I doubt whether such men can as yet be found in Western Australia. I know they have not been plentiful in the other colonies. I know that in some of the legislative chambers of Australia rowdy manners are common, and class interests very much in the ascendant. I am well aware that these chambers are not what they should be,—are very short, indeed, of being model legislative chambers. But nevertheless the work is done,—if not in a perfect, still in a wholesome manner, and the colonies are upon the whole raised to energy, vitality, and dignity by the unseen operations of representative government. I believe that the same result would follow in Western Australia, and that the colonists would gradually throw off that Micawber tone of hoping to which I have alluded, if the duty were imposed upon them of managing for themselves.

I reached the colony from Melbourne at Albany, and I left the colony starting from the same town for Adelaide in

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South Australia. Albany is a very pretty little town on King George's Sound,—which is, I believe, by far the best harbour on the southern coast of the continent. It is moreover, very picturesque, though not equally so with Port Jackson and the coves round Sydney. In Albany there are a few stores, as shops are always called, a brewery, a depôt for coals belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, a church, a clergyman, two or three inns, and two or three government offices. Among the latter I found an old schoolfellow of my own, who filled the office of resident magistrate, and in that capacity acted as judge in all matters not affecting life for a district about as big as Great Britain. His training for these legal duties he had gained by many years' service in the Prussian army, and, I was told, did his work uncommonly well. Albany itself was very pretty, with a free outlook on to a fine harbour, with bluff headlands and picturesque islands. The climate is delightful. The place is healthy. I was assured that the beer brewed there was good. The grapes were certainly good. For a few moments I thought that I also would like to be a resident judge at Albany, with unlimited magisterial power over perhaps a thousand people. It is pleasant, wherever one's lot is cast, to be, if not the biggest, at least among the biggest. But I was told that even at Albany there were squabbles and factions, and that the rose-colour of the place did not prevail always. And then, though grapes grew there, and other fruits, and some flowers, I could not find anything else growing. The useless scrub covered the stony hill-tops close up to the town. The capital was distant 260 miles, and between it and the capital there was nothing. The mails came and went once a month. At each of my visits to Albany the mail excitement was existing. The Tichborne case was at its highest, and people had much to say. When I was departing, there were two bishops there. I fancy that I saw the best of Albany, and that it would be rather dull between the mails.

I travelled to Perth with a friend, having made a bargain with the mail contractor to take us,—not with the mail, which goes through without stopping in seventy hours,—

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but by a separate conveyance in four days, so that we might sleep during the nights. This we did, taking our own provisions with us, and camping out in the bush under blankets. The camping out was, I think, rather pride on our part, to show the Australians that we Englishmen,—my friend, indeed, was a Scotchman,—could sleep on the ground, sub dio, and do without washing, and eat nastiness out of a box as well as they could. There were police barracks in which we might have got accommodation. At any rate, going and coming we had our way. We lit fires for ourselves, and boiled our tea in billies; and then regaled ourselves with bad brandy and water out of pannikins, cooked bacon and potatoes in a frying-pan, and pretended to think that it was very jolly. My Scotch friend was a young man, and was, perhaps, in earnest. For myself, I must acknowledge that when I got up about five o'clock on a dark wet morning, very damp, with the clothes and boots on which I was destined to wear for the day, with the necessity before me of packing up my wet blankets, and endeavoured, for some minutes in vain, to wake the snoring driver, who had been couched but a few feet from me, I did not feel any ardent desire to throw off for ever the soft luxuries of an effeminate civilisation, in order that I might permanently enjoy the freedom of the bush. But I did it, and it is well to be able to do it.

No man perhaps ever travelled two hundred and sixty miles with less to see. The road goes eternally through wood,—which in Australia is always called bush; and, possibly, sandy desert might be more tedious. But the bush in these parts never develops itself into scenery, never for a moment becomes interesting. There are no mountains, no hills that affect the eye, no vistas through the trees tempting the foot to wander. Once on the journey up, and once on the return, we saw kangaroos, but we saw no other animal; now and again a magpie was heard in the woods, but very rarely. The commonest noise is that of the bull-frog, which is very loud, and altogether unlike the sound of frogs in Europe. It is said that the Dutch under Peter Nuyt, when landing somewhere on these coasts,—

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probably near Albany,—were so frightened by the frogs that they ran away. I can believe it, for I have heard frogs at Albany roaring in such a fashion as to make a stranger think that the hills were infested with legions of lions, tigers, bears, and rhinoceroses, and that every lion, tiger, bear, and rhinoceros in the country was just about to spring at him. I knew they were only frogs, and yet I did not like it. The bush in Australia generally is singularly destitute of life. One hears much of the snakes, because the snakes are specially deadly; but one sees them seldom, and no precaution in regard to them is taken. Of all animals, the opossum is the commonest. He may be easily taken, as his habits are known, but he never shows himself. In perfect silence the journey through the bush is made,—fifteen miles to some water-hole, where breakfast is eaten; fifteen on to another water-hole, where brandy and water is consumed; fifteen again to more water, and dinner; and then again fifteen, till the place is reached at which the night-fire is made and the blankets are stretched upon the ground. In such a journey, everything depends on one's companion, and in this I was more than ordinarily fortunate. As we were taken by the mail contractor, we had relays of horses along the road.

Perth I found to be a very pretty town, built on a lake of brackish water formed by the Swan River. It contains 6,000 inhabitants, and of course is the residence of the chief people of the colony,—as the governor is there, and the legislative chamber, and the supreme judge, and the bishop. The governor's house is handsome, as is also the town-hall. The churches,—cathedrals I should call them,—both of the Protestants and Roman Catholics, are large and convenient. On my first arrival I stayed at an inn,—which I did not indeed like very much at first, as the people seemed to be too well off to care for strangers; but which in its accommodation was better than can be found in many towns of the same size in England. I must acknowledge, however, that I was much troubled by musquitoes, and did not think the excuse a good one when I was told that a musquito curtain could not be put up because it was Sunday.

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I found that crime of a heavy nature was not common in Perth or the districts round it, though so large a portion of the population consisted of men who were or had been convicts. Men were daily committed for bad language, drunkenness, absconding, late hours, and offences of like nature. For men holding tickets-of-leave are subjected to laws which make it criminal for a man to leave his master's employ, or to be absent from his master's house after certain hours, or to allude in an improper manner in his master's eyes. And for these offences, sentences of punishment are given which seem to be heavy, because it is difficult to bear in mind the difference between free men and prisoners who are allowed partial freedom under certain conditions.

I have heard it said, more than once or twice, in reference not specially to Perth, but to the whole colony, that the ticket-of-leave men are deterred from violence simply by fear, that they are all thieves when they dare to steal, and that the absence of crime is no proof of reformation. The physiognomy, and gait, and general idleness of the men, their habits of drinking when they can get drink, and general low tendencies, are alleged as proof of this. It cannot be supposed that convicts should come out from their prisons industrious, orderly men, fit for self-management. The restraint and discipline to which they have been subject as convicts, independently of their old habits, would prevent this. The Bill Sykes look of which I have spoken, is produced rather by the gaol than by crime. The men are not beautiful to look at. They do spend their money in drink, filling the bars of the public-houses, till the hour comes at which they must retire. But it is much in such a community that they should not return to crimes of violence.

For myself, I must say that I spent my time in Perth very pleasantly. I remember being reminded once of the injustice done to a certain poor community by a traveller who had wandered thither and had received hospitable treatment. "They cannot be so poor," the traveller had said, "because they gave me champagne every day." Doing honour to the stranger, they had broached their last bottles of the

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generous wine, and, though poor, had put their best foot foremost in exercise of genuine hospitality. I was told how cruel this was. "We were poor," said my informant, "but we gave what we had freely, and were then twitted with making false complaints." I cannot but think of this as I tell my experiences of Perth. I heard very much of the poverty of Western Australia, but I found that people there lived as they do elsewhere. There were carriages and horses, and good dinners, and, if not liveried servants,—a class which is not common in the colonies,—men waiting with white cotton gloves, who in London would be presumed to be greengrocers, but who in Perth were probably "lags." They seemed to hand the dishes very well.

Of the other town, Freemantle, I have already spoken. I went also sixty miles up to the west, to Toodjay and Newcastle, which, from the returns showing the acres under cultivation and the produce, I find to be one of the best agricultural districts in the colony. It is surpassed only by the Greenough district. As to the prospects and past experiences of farmers in this and other parts of the colony, I found it very difficult to get information on which I could rely. I came across men who had been farmers, whose report was anything but good,—who said that to farm in Western Australia was simply to break the heart. And I came across others,—notably two old colonists in the Toodjay and Northam districts,—who assured me that they had done very well. In each of these cases the men had had sons capable of working with their own hands and not too proud to work. Hitherto I do not think that there has been scope for farmers who employed much outside labour. The labour has been dear and bad,—and money has been hard to get. There has always been and still is a great effort to pay labourers in produce,—but this cannot be done entirely, and the farmer who hires has drained from him almost all the money that he can earn.

That the farming has been and is atrociously bad, there can be no doubt. Men continue to crop the same ground with the same crops year after year without manuring it, and when the weeds come thicker than the corn, they simply

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leave it. Machinery has not been introduced. Seed is wasted, and farmers thrash their corn with flails out on the roads after the old Irish fashion. I need hardly say that there is no reason why this should continue to be so. That the land would soon pay for good farming I have no doubt, even though the surplus grain were sent home to England. At present the colony, which should above all things strive to be an agricultural colony, actually imports flour and grain to the amount of about £6,000 per annum.

I have already said that wool is the staple commodity of the country. I doubt much whether it will continue to be so, as the trade of wool-growing does not seem to extend itself in any way at all commensurate with the area of land which it occupies. In 1869, there were 654,054 sheep in Western Australia, and in 1871 the number had increased only to 670,999. In the other wool-growing colonies, it is thought that no squatter can make money on a run with less than 10,000 sheep. In Western Australia, 3,000 or 4,000 are considered to be a fairly large number, and squatters frequently run flocks that do not exceed 1,500 or 2,000 over enormous tracks of land. In New South Wales and Queensland, few squatters have less than a sheep to three acres. No rule can be laid down, as every run must be considered as a whole, and on most runs there is some land, more or less, which is not fit for use at all. But a squatter with 60,000 acres will generally have grass for 20,000 sheep. In Western Australia, one hears of a sheep to ten acres, and a sheep to twenty acres. The sheep of the Australian colonies amount together, I believe, to about forty millions. In Western Australia, which boasts of being the largest in area of them all, there is not as yet one million. In truth there is very much against the squatter. It is not only that much of the land which is called pastoral bears a poisoned shrub fatal to sheep;—but that, from this and other causes, the distances are so great that a sufficient number of sheep to make the business really remunerative can hardly be kept together.

I found rural wages lower in Western Australia than in the other colonies,—the reason for which is of course to be

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traced to the nature of the labour market. The squatter, or farmer, expects to get a man who is or was a convict, and the price of the work is arranged accordingly. It averages about 3*s.* a day without rations, or from 30*s.* to 40*s.* a month with rations. I was told that a man's rations cost 10*s.* a week,—which is much higher than in the other colonies. I do not doubt that the men are charged at this rate. If the man be paid full wages, so that he has to feed himself, he must in most cases get all his supplies from his employer's store, and the employer exacts a large profit. If the employer feeds the man, he calculates the rations supplied at the rate that he would sell them, and fixes his wages accordingly. Thus a man with 40*s.* a month, with rations, would be supposed to receive 80*s.* a month, although he would not cost his employer above 68*s.*

The wages of mechanics are about the same here as in the other colonies: masons, carpenters, and blacksmiths earning about 7*s.* a day throughout the colony.

There are so-called public schools throughout the colony, supported by government, and free to necessitous persons. They who can pay are made to pay, at rates ranging from 6*d.* to 1*s.* a week; but the greater part of the expense of the schools is borne by the colonial revenues. The sum so expended is between £3,000 and £4,000 a year. In 1871, there were 1,730 scholars at these schools, a number which seems to be too small for the population. I find, however, that in the year previous to that, namely, 1870, out of the whole population, there were only 3,945 above the age of five who could neither read nor write.

In Western Australia the State still takes charge of the religion of the people, and pays £3,560 per annum for its ecclesiastical establishment. Of this by far the lion's share goes to the Church of England. There are fourteen so-called chaplains stationed in different districts of the colony, and the theory I believe is, that they are appointed to look after the souls of the convicts. They do, in fact, act as parish clergymen. They receive from the government £200 per annum each, and their income is subsidized to a small degree by the public who attend their churches. Small

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payments are also made to the Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Churches. But all this will soon be altered. The payments from imperial funds will doubtless be discontinued as the convict establishment dies out, and all ecclesiastical payment will be brought to an end by representative government here, as has been or as is being done in the other colonies. I fear that, when it is so, the difficulty of maintaining clergymen in Western Australia will be very great.

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CHAPTER IV.

FUTURE PROSPECTS.

I FEAR that it will seem that in what I have said I have given a verdict against Western Australia. I have intended rather to show how great may be the difficulties attending the establishment of a young colony, which in its early years finds no special or unexpected aid from remarkable circumstances. The same struggles with equal hardship and similar doubts have no doubt been made before, and nothing has been said of them. The strugglers have lived through and fought their way to prosperity, and but little has been heard of the details of the fight. When the Puritans were landed on the shores of Massachusetts men did not rush about the world and write books. It may probably be that they too, at their first starting, had but few glimpses of the glory of the coming Yankee world. It was perhaps only by hard fighting with adverse circumstances that they could get corn, and labour, and money. But they went on, and the glories of Yankeedom are now patent to the whole earth.

It is to the gold that has been found in Eastern Australia that the eastern colonies have owed their rapid rise and great name;—and in a great measure, the want of reputation under which Western Australia labours is due to the golden achievements of her sisters. She would not have been thought to have done so badly, had not those sisters done so well. This cannot be pleaded as being entirely sufficient to account for the effect, because we know that South Australia has not done much with gold, and South Australia

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holds up her head. I have not yet spoken of South Australia, but, when doing so, I will endeavour to show how and why she has prospered.

And then, in another way, the gold-diggings of the eastern colonies have been detrimental not only to the reputation, but to the very existence of Western Australia. Men have constantly gone after the gold. It became almost useless to land emigrants on the western shore. Tidings came of this rush and of that rush, and the new-comers disappeared, soon turning up, as new chums again, in the golden land. I have expressed my opinion more than once that the majority of those who have rushed after gold have done themselves but little good;—but they enriched the colony to which their labour was given, and from which they drew their supplies. Gradually this evil of "rushing" is dying out. The amount of Australian gold produced may go on increasing year by year for many years. They who profess to understand the matter think that it will do so. But the gold will come from quartz-crushing;—from that eating up and digesting of the very bowels of the mountains by heavy machinery, which I have endeavoured to describe elsewhere, —and not by the washing of alluvial soil. It is the latter pursuit which has produced the rushes, whereas the former produces steady industry with a fixed rate of wages. The shifting of labour from colony to colony will, I think, from this cause, become less common than it has been, and agricultural work will hold its own against mining work,— in Australia as in other countries. It is a mining country, and there will be many miners;—but it will not occur to every man that he should be a miner.

In speaking of the future of Western Australia I shall not receive the thanks or sympathies of many of its inhabitants, if I express an opinion that that future is to be independent of gold. The idea is deep-rooted that there should be gold and must be gold,—that Providence cannot have been so unjust as not to have put gold there. Why not in the west as well as in the east? And then the stranger is told of mica, and slate, and quartz, and boulders, —and of the very confident opinion which Mr. Hargreaves

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expressed. I know nothing of mica, and slate, and quartz, and boulders,—and very little of Mr. Hargreaves. But I know that no gold worthy of the name has been found yet; and that the finding of gold in infinitesimal quantities has been common in many countries.. Doubtless gold may turn up in Western Australia, but I trust that the colony will be too wise to wait for it. Should it come, let the favour be accepted from the gods;—but I do not think that men should live expecting it.

In the meantime what other measures may serve to turn the tide, and produce some life and action? The land is good, and if properly tilled will produce all that is necessary for man's life. And the land that will do so, though widely scattered, is abundant. I need hardly say that at home in England there are still among us millions of half-starved people,—half-starved certainly according to the dietary of the poorest even in this poor colony,—to whom the realisation of rural life in Western Australia would seem to be an earthly paradise if it could be understood,—to whom it would be a paradise if it could be reached. I have spoken in anything but flattering terms of the colony and its labourers. I have not depicted the present normal Western Australian carter as a very picturesque fellow. But, bad as he is, he can always get enough to eat and drink, and, if he will behave himself well, can always have a comfortable home.

But they who will come now will not be unpicturesque with the lineaments of the gaol, as he has been, and the more that may come the less probability will there be of mistaken suspicions. Living is cheaper than in England, as meat is 4*d.* instead of 10*d.* a pound, and wages are higher;—for in no agricultural county in England do they rule so high throughout the year as 18*s.* a week. In the colony 18*s.* a week are the lowest that I have known to be given without rations. And the rural labourer in Western Australia is more independent than in England.. How, indeed, could he possibly be less so! He is better clothed, has a better chance of educating his children, and certainly lives a freer and more manly life.

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But how shall the rural labourer out of Sussex, Suffolk, Essex, or Cambridgeshire get to Western Australia? If there were no pecuniary difficulty in the journey,—if every labourer were empowered by Act of Parliament to go to some parish officer and demand to be sent across the ocean,—it is probable that a very large fleet of transport ships would soon be required, and that English farmers would find it difficult to get in their seed. This can never be the case, but something towards it is done. The colonies assist intending immigrants, and the mother country too assists, or, in some cases, pays the entire expense of emigrants. We sent out those ill-born and ill-bred women who were wanted as convicts' wives,—and who, when received, were found to be mere Irish. But it is ill bringing a man out who will not stay when he is brought. If you, my philanthropical reader, send out some favoured tenant or parishioner, your object is fairly achieved whether the man make himself happy in Western Australia or Victoria. But it is by no means so with the colony, when the colony pays. When a colony has paid for three or four hundred immigrants, and finds after a few months that they have all disappeared, and gone to more fortunate lands, the colony not unnaturally becomes disgusted. Then it is that the colony feels that nothing will do but gold. And the mother country is affected somewhat in the same way, though less bitterly. It is said now that England has promised a certain number of free emigrants to Western Australia, and that she has not kept her word. But the mother country says that, as regards Western Australia, it is useless to send her emigrants unless she can keep them. In speaking of the continuance of the obligation on the part of England, Lord Granville, in July, 1869, wrote as follows:—"It has already been laid down as a condition of that continuance that the immigration should be wanted, and such as the colony can provide for; but it is clear from the census returns that the large proportion of these persons who reach Western Australia do not remain in it. There is therefore the strongest primâ facie evidence that the immigration is not wanted." The men are tempted away; and do the colony, for whose benefit they were sent, no good by

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their short sojourn. Then why send them? Renewed petitions for emigrants, emigrants to be sent out at the expense of the government, were made; but the Secretary of State was firm. Nominated emigrants would remain,—emigrants nominated by friends in the colony. So pleaded the governor, with an anxiety which showed that at any rate his heart was in the matter. But the Secretary of State was still hard. "Her Majesty's Government are fully aware," he said in 1870, "that nominated emigrants are more likely to remain in the colony than others; but unfortunately they have no evidence before them that either one or the other class do in fact remain."

How shall men and women be got who will remain;—who will come to the place in order that they may live upon the land, and not simply making it a stepping-stone to some rush for gold? It can only be done by making the land attractive; and the great attraction offered by land is ownership. Let a man understand that he can have land of his own and live upon it, owing rent to no one and service to no one, subject to no bondage, with no one to order his coming in and his going out, with no tasks laid on his shoulders by another, that he can be altogether free from the dominion of a master, and you open up to his mental eyes a view of life that is full of attraction. This new home, that is so unlike the home that he is to leave, is indeed far across the waters, in another world, away from the comrades and circumstances of his life amidst which he feels that, though wretched, he is secure. He feels that if he go he can never return; and he hears vague, unsatisfactory, even contradictory accounts of the new land. He knows that he is groping his way, and that, should he go, he will at last take a leap in the dark. Even with those among us who have many friends, the nature of whose life has taught us where to look for information, who can not only write but express in writing what we mean, who can not only read but know where to find the books that will teach us that we want to learn, there is felt to be much difficulty when the question arises whether we shall remove ourselves and our household gods to the new home that we call a colony, or

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whether we shall send a son to push his fortunes in the new country. To digest what we have learned and bring it all together so that we may act upon it safely is no easy task. What must it be to the working man whom some newspaper has reached, or some advertisement to emigrants; and who, in addition to this, has heard the vague surmises of his neighbour? He goes to the parson, or to the squire, or perhaps to his employer,—and is recommended to remain. The adviser hardly dares to say otherwise, and is probably himself impregnated with the patriotic idea that there is no place for an Englishman like England. For members of parliament, and men with £5,000 a year, or with prosperous shops in Cheapside,—for some even whose fortune is less brilliant than that,—England is a very comfortable home. No land can beat it. But for Englishmen in general, that is, for the bulk of the working population of the country, it is I think by no means the best place. A large proportion of our labouring classes cannot even get enough to eat. A still larger proportion are doomed so to work that they can think of nothing but a sufficiency of food. In all the Australian colonies, if a man will work the food comes easily, and he can turn his mind elsewhere. I do not assert that there is no poverty,—no distress. Even in Western Australia the government is obliged to maintain an establishment for paupers. But poverty is not the rule, and a man who will work and can work may be independent.

Success in emigration depends much on the fashion of the thing, and this peculiar exodus,—to Western Australia namely,—is not at present fashionable. If in the course of the next two or three years two or three thousand newcomers were to land upon its shores and stay there, the thing would be done. And the two or three thousand would find plenty and happy homes. But solitary immigrants to the colony feel that they become mixed with the convict population. At the present moment great encouragement has been offered to new-comers,—to men who on arriving with a few pounds in their pockets will be willing to work with their own hands, but who will so work on their own lands.

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I do not know how far, in what I have written of the other colonies, I may have been able to make my English reader understand the nature and position of a "free-selecter." I found it very difficult to understand myself, or to come to a conclusion whether he should be regarded as the normal British emigrant,—manly, industrious, independent, and courageous,—or a mere sheep-stealer. There was one other alternative, hardly more attractive than the last. He need not be a mere sheep-stealer, though probably he would do a little in that line; but might have free-selected with the first great object of making his presence so unbearable to the squatter on whose run he had perched himself, that the squatter would be obliged to buy him out. I certainly found that the manly, independent, and courageous free-selecter was not the free-selecter of whom the squatters talked to me in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. The squatters did not carry me with them altogether; but it certainly is the case that free-selecters in these colonies often do steal sheep, and often do make themselves disagreeable. A man desirous of free-selecting,—say in Queensland and New South Wales, for the game has nearly been played out within the smaller and more valuable confines of Victoria,—has the whole world of the colony open to him, and very little to divert his course. He searches and inquires, and, actuated by good or bad motives, settles down on some bit of land which he thinks will grow corn, and where he is sure to be hated by the squatter whom he is invading. The colonial governments offer him every possible encouragement as to money,—land at 15*s.* an acre, land at 10*s.* an acre, and especially land with deferred payments,—with payments taking the shape of rent, perhaps 1*s.* 6*d.* or 1*s.* an acre per annum,—the land becoming his own at the end of a term of years, the yearly deferred payments having been taken as the price of it. But the governments have done little or nothing to assist the free-selecter in placing himself. A part of the charm of the thing in the eyes of the free-selecter has been the power of choosing his land. We can understand that there is a pleasure in going well on to the run of some great squatter, pegging out some 40, 80, or

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160 acres, and saying, "By your leave, sir, I mean to have this." We can understand that there is pleasure in doing it, and great pain in enduring it. My sympathies have been chiefly with the free-selecter, not believing that he is always a sheep-stealer, and feeling that the land should be open to him. Pastoral autocrats with acres by the hundreds of thousands,—acres which are not their own,—cannot fill up a country. They are the precursors of population, and, as the population comes, should make way for it. But might it not be arranged that the free-selecters should be invited to come and take up their lands in some manner less objectionable than that which has hitherto prevailed?

When I was in Western Australia new land regulations were issued and proclaimed, having just received the sanction of the Colonial Office at home; and these regulations go a long way towards effecting a remedy for those evils attaching to free-selection which I have attempted to describe, —and they will remedy another evil which, in Western Australia especially, is very detrimental to the selecting farmer. They will bring the agricultural occupiers of the land together. Men are invited to occupy lands chosen for "special occupation." By this arrangement the skill and experience of the land officers of the colony will be used on behalf of the selecter, who will not only be enabled to place himself on soil capable of bearing corn, but will find himself surrounded by others, occupied as he is in producing corn. In this way rural communities may be formed which shall not be sheep-stealing communities. The locality having been chosen in the first place, not by the new-comer, but by the government, sheep-stealing will not at any rate have been the object when the choice was made,—nor the idea that a squatter if harassed sufficiently may at last be induced to buy his neighbour out. Communities will be formed, and communities will make markets. I have sometimes thought that free-selecters like to take their land up far away in the bush, at long distances each from another. There is a wild independence in the doing so which charms. But no decision can be more detrimental to the man's material interest. When so located he is driven to consume all that

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he grows, and then,—unless he steal sheep,—he can consume nothing else. That which is most to be desired by him is that gradually a township should be formed round his homestead.

Immigrants and others are invited by these new regulations to take up land selected for special occupation, and great boons are offered to those who will do so. In the first place the payment of the price of the land is deferred. Hitherto in this colony it has always been necessary that the price of the land should be paid down. The land, as has been explained elsewhere, has been purchased at various prices, ranging from 5*s.* to 20*s.* an acre,—but there has been no deferred payment. At last 10*s.* an acre was the settled price,—and so it remains. The ordinary free-selecter may go where he will beyond the limits of town, suburban, or mineral lands, and, if no purchaser have been before him, may purchase any amount of land in blocks of not less than 40 acres, at 10*s.* an acre. But when purchasing after this fashion he must pay his money down. If he will take up land selected for special occupation, he need not pay his money down. He need only pay 1*s.* an acre per annum, such payment being required in advance. He must then fence the whole of his land and till a quarter of it during the ten years over which the payment is deferred.—and if he do thus the land becomes his own.

There are other stipulations which the intending emigrant should understand. The purchaser cannot purchase in this manner less than 100 acres. It is considered that he cannot crop all the land yearly, and that less than 100 acres will not afford a man subsistence. Nor can he take up more than 500 acres. In addition to the use of the land which will be his own at the end of the ten years, and will be in his own hands during the previous occupancy, the selecter will be entitled to run cattle and sheep upon commonages, or neighbouring lands not fitted for agricultural purposes. It is stipulated that the common land shall in no case exceed 200 per cent. of the land fitted for agricultural purposes,—so that the commonage for 2,000 agricultural acres, or acres fit for agriculture, shall not exceed 4,000 acres. It is not

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stipulated that the commonage shall amount to any fixed number of acres. It is understood, however, that it will suffice,—not of course for the produce of wool,—but for meat and milk.

In writing for the information of future emigrants, it is very difficult to make the exact truth clearly intelligible. The new regulations speak of land fitted for agricultural purposes, and in what I have written above I have spoken of "agricultural" land. The emigrant who comes out to take up lands selected for special occupation in Western Australia, must not expect that he will find ploughed fields. He will find forest land, covered more or less thickly with timber,—what all the world in Australia knows as bush,—and it will be his first work to clear that portion of his holding from which he intends to get his first crop. But the land will have been chosen as being fitted, when cleared, for agricultural purposes. The thickness, and what I may call obduracy, of timber is very various. It may be presumed that the land chosen will not be heavily timbered. I was told that the average price of clearing bush in Western Australia was about £4 an acre. A man contracting to do such work would expect to make 25*s.* a week. If this be so, a man knowing what he was about would clear an acre in three weeks.

But, to my thinking, the best part of the offer made still remains to be told. Any emigrant taking up land in the colony selected for special occupation within six months of his landing,—the time named should I think have been prolonged to at least twelve months,—and who can show that he has fulfilled the above conditions with regard to improvements, is entitled to the value of his passage-money out, provided that passage-money does not exceed £15; and he will have the same allowance made to him for every adult he brings with him,—the money to be credited to him in the payments made for his land. The offer in fact amounts to this,—that thirty acres will be allowed free for every adult whom the immigrant may bring with him to settle on the land, provided that the passage out has cost £15,—which is I presume the usual price of sending an

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adult to Western Australia. I am also assured, certainly on good authority, that half the allowance will be made for non-adults; but there is no proviso in the bill itself to this effect.

The result of all this any intending emigrant can calculate for himself. A man with a wife and one adult and one non-adult child would in fact get his one hundred acres for nothing. If his family were larger, he would get more land;—but he should bear in mind that he has to fence it all and till a quarter of it within ten years, and that in this way a larger acreage may become an increased burden to him rather than an increased property.

Of course I am here addressing those who have in their own hands the means of emigrating. Not only will the £15 a head be wanting in bringing out his family, but also something on which to live when the new country is first reached. But, presuming that a working man with a working family can raise £200,—a very strong presumption I fear,—I do not know that he could do better than establish himself as a farmer in Western Australia.

I believe that Western Australia has no agent at home, as have the other colonies, a part and perhaps the chief part of whose business it is to facilitate the emigration of those who intend settling themselves in the new colony. Why should we pay an agent to send us emigrants when no emigrants will come to us? That no doubt is the feeling of a desponding Western Australian. And yet the colony has, as I think, with much wisdom offered most alluring terms to emigrants. At present, however, I do not see how these terms are to be made known to persons at home. I say this as an apology for the insertion here of details which cannot, I fear, interest the ordinary reader.

It is admitted on all hands that Western Australia cannot be made to thrive until her population shall be increased by new-comers. Twenty-five thousand people may perhaps live together in comfort within confines which shall be sufficiently extended to afford to all a sufficiency of land, and at the same time compact enough to bring them together. But Western Australia is an enormous country, and its scanty population is spread about it by hundreds. The so-

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called settled districts are twelve in number, and the average area of each is more than half as big as England. The average population of each district is only just above 2,000. Let the English reader conceive the ten northern counties of England with 2,000 inhabitants between them! And in saying this I am speaking of the settled districts,—not of the distant regions which are claimed by the colony as belonging to it, and which will remain probably for centuries, perhaps for ever, uninhabited. An influx of population is necessary to Western Australia, not only that there may be enough of men and women to form a community and administer to each other's wants, but that the very nature may be changed of those upon whose industry the colony now depends. In its deep distress it accepted convicts, and was saved, as I think, from utter collapse by doing so. But the salvation effected was not healthy in its nature. I have given the figures over and over again. To make up a population of twenty-five thousand souls, ten thousand male convicts have been sent! Life and property are fairly safe. Work is done. The place is by no means a lawless place. Those who emerge from their sentences reformed are encouraged to prosper. Those who come out unreformed are controlled and kept down. But nevertheless the convict flavour pervades the whole,—to the great detriment of that part of the working population which has always been free. This evil is of course curing itself by degrees. The colony receives no more convicts, and the very birth and growth of its young citizens will gradually obliterate the flavour. But this would be done much more quickly and much more effectually by an influx of new blood. Nothing would tend so much to the improvement of the people as any step that would enable the enfranchised convict to move about among his fellow-labourers without being known as a convict. It is so in New South Wales and Tasmania. Intimate intercourse will probably reveal the secrets of a man's past life in any country; and if a man once degraded afterwards rise high, his former degradation will be remembered. But in these once convict colonies time is having its effect, and men's minds are not always referring to the matter. It does not

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affect the rate of wages, nor the character of the work to be done. The once convict does not feel that every one regards him as a convict, and does not therefore work as convicts work. In Western Australia the man who never was a convict will fall into such habits of work, simply because they form the rule of life around him. Nothing but an increasing population will cure this quickly.

But the very fact that it is so, the very injury to which the colony has been subjected in this matter, gives in one respect the surest promise that here a new-comer may find a prosperous home. In England, as all the world knows, residences of all kinds are to be had at a much cheaper rate to the east of London than at the west. The east has all its disadvantages,—which are chiefly of a sentimental or fashionable nature. The man who can despise these may live there in a commodious house, who would be forced to put up with straitened quarters if he allowed himself to follow the fashion. Western Australia is the east side of London. The objections to it, bad as they are, concern chiefly sentiment and fashion. I do not recommend the man who is taking out £20,000 to a colony, with the idea of becoming a great man, to go there; but to him who feels that with £200 or £300 he has but little hope in England, and who would prefer independence and property of his own to the composite luxuries and miseries of a crowded country, I think that Western Australia offers perhaps as good a field for his small capital as any other colony.

I have endeavoured, as I have gone on, to indicate the natural sources of wealth to which the colony has a right to look. To those that I have already named I should add the breeding of horses, for which it seems to be specially adapted. At present the business is limited by the difficulty which the breeders have in disposing of their produce. India is their great market,—together with Batavia and Singapore. But there are no middle traders to take the young horses off the hands of the breeders,—who cannot themselves breed horses, and charter ships, and conduct the sales. This again is one of the evils to which a scanty population is ever subject.

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I have no doubt that the exportation of jarrah-wood and of pearl-shell will become large and prosperous trades. The former will probably be by far the most beneficial to the colony, as it will be prosecuted by men in the colony, —whereas the pearl-shell will be sought and taken away by coasting strangers. It is hard, too, to believe that a country should be so prolific in grapes as this is without some result. I will not take upon myself to say that I drank West Australian wine with delight. I took it with awe and trembling, and in very small quantities. But we all know that the art of making wine does not come in a day;—and even should it never be given to the colony to have its Château This, or Château That, its 1841, its 1857, or 1865, or the like, —still it may be able to make raisins against the world.

Gold of course may turn up even yet. For myself, I look to corn and fruit, and perhaps oil,—to the natural products springing from the earth,—as the source of the future comfort of this enormous territory.

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